Cecil. H. Clough. 6d. Ross.
20. May. 48.

THE

ENGLISH REFORMATION.

BY

FRANCIS CHARLES MASSINGBERD, M.A.,

RECTOR OF SOUTH ORMSBY.

As for my Religion, I die in the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Faith, professed by the whole Church before the disunion of East and West; more particularly, I die in the communion of the Church of England as it stands distinguished from all Papal and Puritan innovations, and as it adheres to the doctrine of the Cross.—BISHOP KEN'S *Will.*

SECOND EDITION, REVISED AND ENLARGED.

LONDON:
JOHN W. PARKER, WEST STRAND.

M.DCCC.XLVII.

S. H. Prickett

TO THE

VENERABLE EDWARD CHURTON, M.A.,

ARCHDEACON OF CLEVELAND AND RECTOR OF CRAYKE;

WHOSE FRIENDSHIP

THE AUTHOR COUNTS AMONG THE PRIME BLESSINGS OF HIS LIFE,

THESE PAGES,

UNDERTAKEN AT HIS REQUEST, AND IMPROVED BY HIS ASSISTANCE,

ARE MOST AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED.

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2025

https://archive.org/details/bwb_KU-357-541

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Writer takes this, the earliest opportunity afforded him, to acknowledge the obligations he was under, in the preparation of the first edition of this book, to his friend, now Archdeacon Churton, who not only undertook to superintend the Press during his unavoidable absence from England, but generously added several matters from the stores of his own learning. The account of King John, in Chapter III., and that of the persecution of the Jews, Chapter V., and some of the earlier parts of Chapter VI., were from his pen. He also supplied the extracts from Thomas of Eccleston, in the history of the Friars, in Chapter VII., and some of those from Wycliffe's writings in Chapter VIII.

The original Spanish Records of the Marian Persecution, are from a series of papers, by the same hand, in the *British Magazine*. These researches, which Bishop Burnet was advised, but neglected, to make, throw a new light on those events, and can never be overlooked by any future writer.

The Author has taken the opportunity of the present edition, to supply some historical notices of the doc-

trinal innovations in the Medieval Church; and has been able to give the events of the English Reformation somewhat more at length, as they were originally written by him, but necessarily abridged to meet the dimensions to which the books of the Series for which he wrote were confined.

TABLE OF CONTENTS.

Chapter I.

Introductory.

A.D.		PAGE
	Cardinal Pole's opinion on the Abuses of the Church	2
	Erasmus on the same	*ib.*
	Carranza, Archbishop of Toledo, his Sermon at the Council of Trent	3
	——— his part in Cranmer's death	4
	Philip de Mornay (Du Plessis)	4
	Lord Clarendon, on the English Reformation	6
	Archbishop Sancroft, on the same	7

Chapter II.

Wycliffe and Pope Gregory XI.

1377	Commencement of Wycliffe's resistance to the Church of Rome	8
1356	His *Last Age of the Church*	11
1361	Wycliffe, Master of Balliol College	*ib.*
1372	——— Doctor of Divinity	*ib.*
1377	Bull of Pope Gregory against him	13
	Archbishop Sudbury, character of	16
	——— Courtney, ditto	*ib.*
1378	Wycliffe's first citation at St. Paul's	19
	His Defence	21
	Death of Pope Gregory XI.	26

Chapter III.

Rise and Progress of the Papal Power.—Schism of the Popes, A.D. 1378.

	Origin of the Papal Power	28
	Opinions of St. Gregory	*ib.*
	Forged Decretals	30
1066	Pope Hildebrand	32
1199	Innocent III.	35

A.D.		PAGE
	King John and De Bruce	36
	Canon Law	40
	Excommunication	42
	Amount of Church Property	43
	Numbers of Clergy	45
1304	Boniface VIII.	47
1309	Popes at Avignon	48
1224	Inquisition in Germany	49
1233	Inquisition in Thoulouse	*ib.*
1270	Bishops' prisons in England	50
1378	Schism of the Popes	*ib.*

Chapter IV.

Transubstantiation.—Penance.—Confession.

820	Paschasius Radbertus, the first Teacher of Transubstantiation	53
——	—— answered by Bertram	54
970	Ælfric's Saxon Homily	*ib.*
1079	Berengarius	55
1215	Decree of Fourth Lateran Council	*ib.*
1264	*Corpus Domini*	56
	Communion in one kind	57
1215	Auricular Confession	59
1438	Purgatory	61
1096 1215	Indulgences	62

Chapter V.

Effects of Papal Supremacy in England.—Jews.—Good Bishops.

1207	Cardinal Langton	64
1234	St. Edmund, Archbishop of Canterbury	65
1250	Robert Grosteste, Bishop of Lincoln	*ib.*
	Council of Lyons	67
1290	Expulsion of Jews from England	69
1313	Raynold, Archbishop	73
	Privileges granted to him	74
1349	Hermit of Hampole	75
1352	Archbishop Fitzralph	77
1349	Archbishop Bradwardine	78
	Celibacy of the Clergy	79

Chapter VI.

Monasteries and Chantries.

A.D.		PAGE
	Gyraldus Cambrensis	81
	Lantony, Monmouthshire	*ib.*
	William of Newborough	83
	Richard I.	84
	Benedictines and Cluniacs	86
	Slavery	88
	Number of Inmates	89
	Bolton Abbey	90
	Chantries	91
	Abbé Fleury	95

Chapter VII.

The Mendicant Orders; their Rise and History.

1221	First Dominican Friars in England	98
	St. Francis	99
1224	——— Stigmata	100
——	First Franciscans in England	103
	Fitzralph opposed to them	107
	And Chaucer	*ib.*
	Friar Bacon	110
1276	Friars made Popes	113
1389	Bartholomew of Pisa	115
1328	Immaculate Conception	111
	Miracle Plays	120
	Pilgrimages and Indulgences	122

Chapter VIII.

Wycliffe's Translation of the Bible.—His Denial of Transubstantiation—His Death.

1380	Wycliffe's Translation of the Bible	125
	His Doctrine about the use of Holy Scripture	127
	Wycliffe's "Poor Priests"	129
1383	Bishop Spencer's Crusade	133
	Friar Woodford's Arguments	135
	Wycliffe's "Charter of Heaven"	138
1381	——— Public Denial of Transubstantiation	140
——	Oxford Decree against him	141
——	Courtney, Archbishop	142
1382	English Convocation decrees for Transubstantiation	145
1384	Death of Wycliffe	149

Chapter IX.

Wycliffe's Character, Opinions, and Followers.—The Lollards.—Their Numbers and Influence.—Acts of Parliament against the Papacy.—Archbishop Arundel.

A.D.		PAGE
	Character of Wycliffe	150
	Supposed origin of his resistance to the Papacy	153
	His Followers	155
	Lollard Noblemen	157
	Lollard Wills	158
	Lollard Preachers	165
1392	Royal Supremacy acknowledged	169
1395	Lollard Petition to Parliament	170
1396	Archbishop Arundel	172

Chapter X.

Usurpation of Henry IV.—Persecuting Statute.—Trials of the Lollards.—Lord Cobham.

1399	Usurpation of Henry IV.	174
1401	Statute for burning Heretics	176
1406	Proposal for seizing Church Property	180
1428	Burning of Wycliffe's Bones	183
	Trait of Henry V.	184
1413	Lord Cobham	187

Chapter XI.

Council of Constance.—Bishop Hallam.—Persecutions in England.—Bishop Peacock.—Wars of York and Lancaster.

1415	Council of Constance	197
1416	Martyrdom of Huss	198
	And Jerome of Prague	*ib.*
	Bishop Hallam	199
	Election of Martin V. and termination of the Schism	266
1414	Oxford "Articles of Reformation"	201
1416	Archbishop Chicheley's Constitutions	202
1416	John Claydon	*ib.*
	False accusation of making his Son a Priest	204
1444	Bishop Peacock	205
1447	His recantation	208

Chapter XII.

The Church in the Fifteenth Century.—Schools and Colleges founded.—Decline and Vices of Monasteries.

A.D.		PAGE
1379	William of Wykeham	210
1458	William of Wainfleet	212
1489	Visitation of St. Alban's Abbey	214
1439	Immaculate conception	218
	Erasmus at Becket's Shrine	220
	Miracle of St. Alban's	223
1487	Abuse of Sanctuary	224
1421	College Life	225

Chapter XIII.

Condition of the Parochial Clergy in the Fifteenth Century.—Power of the Popes, and their Character.

	Poverty of the Parochial Clergy	229
	"Provision" and Laws against it	231
	Ignorance of the Parochial Clergy	233
	Martin V.	235
	Betrayal of Confessions	236
1438	Pragmatic Sanction	237
	Resistance in Germany	*ib.*
	And in England	238
1492	Pope Alexander VI.	239
1513	Leo X.	241

Chapter XIV.

King Henry VIII. and Cardinal Wolsey.—Luther.—The King's Divorce, and Submission of the Clergy.

1509	Accession of Henry VIII.	242
1514	Promotion of Wolsey	244
1517	Martin Luther	247
1522	Henry styled Defender of the Faith	251
1526	Tindal's Bible	252
1527	Henry sues for a Divorce	254
1529	Trial of the Divorce	256
1530	Fall of Wolsey	258
——	His Death	260
1531	Submission of the Clergy	264

Chapter XV.

State of Parties.—Cranmer, Archbishop.—King excommunicated.—Supremacy of Pope renounced by Parliament.—Bible in English.

A.D.		PAGE
1532	Thomas Bilney	267
	Latimer	269
1532	Cranmer made Primate	271
	John Frith	274
1534	King excommunicated	277
——	Acts of Parliament against Rome	278
	Church of England appeals to a General Council	281
	Law for Suffragan Bishops	282
	Convocation's Vote for a Translation of the Bible	283

Chapter XVI.

Death of More and Fisher.—Paul III. and Cardinal Pole.—Suppression of Monasteries.

1535	Accession of Paul III.	288
	Death of More and Fisher	*ib.*
	Reginald Pole	289
	Visitation of Monasteries	293
1536	Suppression of lesser Monasteries	295
	Pilgrimage of Grace	297
1539	Surrender of larger Abbeys	299
	Abbot of Glastonbury	301

Chapter XVII.

Conduct and Character of Cranmer.—Last Years of Henry VIII.—The Six Articles.—Fall of Cromwell.—Catharine Parr and Ann Askew.—Progress of Reformation.—Council of Trent.

1539	The Six Articles	312
1540	Death of Cromwell	314
1543	Queen Catharine Parr	317
	Ann Askew	320
1547	Death of King Henry VIII.	325
	Books of Religion published in his reign	327
1545	Council of Trent	329

CHAPTER XVIII.

Edward VI.—Protector Somerset.—Homilies.—Suppression of Chantries.

A.D.		PAGE
1547	Accession of Edward VI.	333
	Somerset made Protector	335
	Progress of Reformation	341
	Chantries suppressed	346

CHAPTER XIX.

Communion Service in English.—First Reformed Prayer Book.

	Consultations on the Mass	349
1548	Communion in English	351
——	Cranmer's Catechism	353
1549	First Prayer Book	355

CHAPTER XX.

Foreign Reformers.—Dispute about the Habits.—Popular Discontent.

	Martin Bucer and Peter Martyr	365
1550	Hooper's refusal to wear his Bishop's Dress	368
	Ridley made Bishop of London	361
	——— removes Altars	370
	Joan Bocher	373
	Popular Tumults	376

CHAPTER XXI.

Fall of Somerset.—Cranmer's Book.—Second Reformed Prayer Book.—Articles.—Reformatio Legum.—Death of Edward.—Council of Trent.

1549	Fall of Somerset	379
1550	Cranmer's *Defence of the True and Catholic Doctrine, &c.*	380
	The "Real Presence"	383
1552	Second Prayer Book	387
1553	The Forty-two Articles	388
	The Reformatio Legum	389
1552	Death of Somerset	392

A.D.		PAGE
	Power of Northumberland	393
	Deprivation of Tonstal	*ib.*
	Cranmer's Associates	396
1553	Death of Edward VI.	401
1551	Council of Trent determines for Transubstantiation	404

Chapter XXII.

Reign of Queen Mary.—Restoration of Popery.—Persecutions.

1553	Lady Jane Gray	405
	Gardiner made Lord Chancellor	408
	Mass set up at Canterbury	411
	Mary's First Parliament	413
	Romish Articles	414
1554	Clergy ejected	415
	The Bishops at Oxford	417
	The Queen's Marriage	421
	Authors of the Persecution	423
	Sentiments of Charles V.	427
	And of Philip	429
	Spanish Records	431

Chapter XXIII.

The Persecutions.—The Bishops at Oxford.—Death of Ridley and Latimer.—Troubles at Frankfort.

1555	Rogers, Hooper, and Taylor burnt	434
	Martyrs' Letters	437
	Trial of Cranmer	439
	Death of Ridley and Latimer	443
	Recantations	445
	Troubles at Frankfort	447

Chapter XXIV.

Fall and Death of Cranmer.—Death of Queen Mary.

1556	Cranmer's Recantation	455
	His Death	459
1558	Death of Queen Mary	465
	Fate of Carranza	*ib.*

Chapter XXV.

Queen Elizabeth.—Reformed Religion restored.

A.D.		PAGE
1558	Accession of Elizabeth	467
1559	Act of Uniformity	471
	Consecration of Archbishop Parker	476

Chapter XXVI.

Conduct of Papal Party.—Puritans.—Conclusion.

1559	Jewel's Apology	480
	Appendix	501

THE

ENGLISH REFORMATION.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

Speak gently of our Sister's fall :—
Who knows but gentle love
May win her, at our patient call,
The surer way to prove ?—*Christian Year.*

THE history of the Church of Christ is the history of a conflict between the powers of evil and the power of good. The enemy of the souls of men never sleeps in his cruel attempt to pervert the best things, and to betray to their ruin those whom God will save. Accordingly, since the time when Christ set up his Church as the means in and by which he would save the world, it might be expected that the adversary, who could not destroy, would use all his arts to corrupt it. And this may supply a clue to some things in the history of the Church which might seem inexplicable on other grounds.

It is hardly possible to conceive anything more magnificent than the notion of the Catholic Church, as it must have appeared to the faithful during the first ages of its existence. The stone cut out without hands which smote the image and became a great mountain and filled

the whole earth[1]: this prophetic figure seemed to be realised in the way in which the Christian Church, without human aid, pervaded the Roman empire, and survived its dissolution. And good men might think it was thus that the kingdoms of this world should become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ[2]. And yet at this very time there was growing up in the dominions of Him whose kingdom is not of this world, a temporal power which in the course of time assumed an empire unknown before, and in connexion with which the Gospel was corrupted and the truth suppressed in an almost incredible degree. That it was so is no modern fiction, but was confessed almost universally in the ages which preceded the Reformation, and even while that event was in progress. The very preachers at the Council of Trent made their pulpits ring with their laments of the profane pomp and secular delights in which faith and charity had become dead. Cardinal Pole, who presided at some of the earlier sessions of that Council, had declared that the abuses of the Court of Rome had brought the Church to the brink of ruin; and the clear-sighted Erasmus, though he did not forsake the communion of Rome, complained that "the monks and friars would be content with nothing but the re-establishment of cruelty, ignorance and superstition; and that popes, cardinals, and bishops, who had caused the disorder, could never apply the remedy, or extinguish the fire which their own pride and covetousness had kindled[3]." And one of the most distinguished preachers at that Council, taking for his text the question of the Apostles, "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" describes the progress of the Gospel in the Apostolic times, "Oh blessed ages, that beheld Israel in her beauty!" and then contrasts these ages with his own. "But how does the Church at this day maintain this character? How have you, fathers,

[1] Dan. ii. 34, 35. [2] Rev. xi. 15.
[3] Epist. xix. 38, xxix. 69.

whom Christ left as his vicegerents, you the bishops of his household, the watchmen and guards of his fortress, you doctors and keepers of this city, leaders in this warfare, preserved the purity of the holy spouse of Christ? Suppose, oh! fathers, that Christ should now return—He will return quickly—and require of you his spouse as He left her to your care, how will you restore her to Him? Her who goes proudly in this profane pomp and secular apparel? Her who now contends with princes in the magnificence of her palaces. Her who lives at ease in the abundance of secular delights? Is this that Holy City separated from the spirit of the world? Is this that city of God governed by divine laws? The very same. Alas! how changed from what she was. Is this that city of perfect beauty, the joy of the whole world? Must we not rather call her all hideous, all her beauty gone—'the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint, from the sole of the foot to the crown of the head there is no soundness.' Where are thy ornaments with which thou wast prepared to be delivered to thy bridegroom? Where is that faith which even raised the dead? Where thy charity? Where that contempt of life and things present? Where that ardent desire of death and heavenly things? Where that thirst to behold the kingdom of God? Where that love of poverty? Alas! alas! my fathers, who shall behold her with tearless eyes? Oh! citizens of the New Jerusalem, that royal and holy city, who that understands these things can remain unmoved? Who that has a Christian's heart can hear these things without trembling? Who can but pity his mother? I will pray with Jeremy, 'Oh that my head were waters and mine eye a fountain of tears.[1]'"

But when we consider that "an enemy hath done this[2]," it ought to make us humble and mistrustful as to ourselves, as well as charitable towards others. The

[1] Labbe. *Concil.*, tom. xiv. p. 1832. [2] St. Matt. xiii. 28.

very author of this beautiful oration, Carranza, archbishop of Toledo, was himself afterwards betrayed by the false principles which he had been taught to adopt, to persecute men who sought to restore the Church to its ancient purity, and residing in England as confessor to Queen Mary, if the historians of his own country may be believed[1], was a chief agent in the martyrdom of Cranmer. And it is thus for the most part that corruptions in religion are brought about. The net would be spread in vain if it were set in our sight[2], but if the betrayer of men's souls can once succeed so far as to entangle them in wrong or wicked principles, he will not fail to urge them on into crimes to which those principles necessarily lead.

And the same considerations may account for the imperfect way in which whatever was done by way of reformation was accomplished. During the fifteenth century the desire of a reformation was so universal, and the acknowledgment of its necessity so general, that all men considered it inevitable, and the only question was when and how it should be done. Even so late as after the civil strifes of the sixteenth century in France, we find the widow of a French nobleman[3], who had spent his life in promoting it, writing to her son, that "a reformation of the Church cannot now much longer be delayed;" not contemplating a separation from the Church, but the reformation of it. And yet so it was, that the admixture of human error in all the attempts that were made, was permitted to obstruct the excellence of the design, and afforded a plea and a temptation to those whose self-love was wounded, and whose authority was questioned, to adhere more closely to their errors.

It is an inquiry too far removed from the subject of these pages, how soon the seeds might be sown from which arose that growth of corruption which claimed

---

[1] Fernandez, *Hist. Eccl.*, cxxix.

[2] Prov. i. 17.

[3] Philip de Mornay.

the title or the sanction of the Catholic Church during the middle ages. Our business is rather to contemplate the papal system as it was at the time of the Reformation, and in the ages immediately preceding it, in order to form a judgment of what was required to be done by way of reformation, and how far and by what means it was accomplished. And if we shall find, as the result of our inquiry, that we almost alone in England, of all the people of Western Christendom, were permitted to retain the primitive form and discipline of the Church, while we regained the primitive profession of Gospel truth, it is to be hoped that we shall learn a lesson of deep thankfulness for such unspeakable mercies,—of thankfulness, and yet of fear. For if such be indeed the character of our Church, we ought to expect that such a Church will be peculiarly liable to be tried by all changes of temptation, and that prosperity and adversity will each in turn be brought to undermine it.

But if the view here taken of the course by which error was brought into the Church in former ages be correct, it will be useful to bear it in mind on more accounts than one. It will teach us to mistrust ourselves, and to speak gently of others. The corruptions of popery were the growth of ages; and the course which those corruptions took was in most cases, and in the outset, the perverting or suppressing of some truth rather than the maintaining of falsehood. Only we must take care that we do not confound the boundaries of right and wrong, but remember that error is not less error because it is capable of being explained into some kindred truth.

And there is one consideration connected with this inquiry which is calculated to afford the utmost contentment to all true members of this Reformed Church, as regards their present position. It is capable of being shown that all the most important steps in the progress of our English Reformation were taken by men who found themselves providentially placed, by no seeking of their own, in circumstances in which they were

obliged to act. The supremacy of the crown was already the law of England before the reign of Henry VIII., so that the convocation under Archbishop Wareham could not do otherwise than recognise what Archbishop Courtney had declared near two centuries before. Cranmer, whose introduction to the notice of the king might have seemed as improbable as that of any private tutor in the family of a private gentleman in the present day, found the royal supremacy already established, and the Church of England placed in what he believed to be its original state of independence, before ever he came to the primacy. And throughout his career, his object was rather to direct the current of events, and regulate as he might the tide on which he was embarked, than to carry out preconceived theories of his own. And though this course may be despised by men of the world, the Christian ever loves to wait God's time, and is content to act when circumstances, without his own seeking, show him that God's providence calls upon him to do so.

This cannot be better expressed than in the words of the great and good Lord Clarendon. "A Church thus reformed, with such pious wariness in the observation, and after a long expectation of the just season of its reformation, and all the religious circumstances requisite thereto, chose rather for a long time to endure many errors and corruptions in the exercise and worship of the religion that had been established, than precipitately to enter upon any alteration, which might have been attended with a concussion in the state, and destroyed its peace and security; and by a Christian patience waited God's own leisure and direction; and was then so blessed as to abolish nothing that was necessary or fit to be retained, and retained nothing but what was held decent by the most venerable antiquity[1]."

With regard to those communities on the continent

[1] *Essays, Divine and Moral*, p. 275.

of Europe, which shared the struggle of the Reformation, but with less patience in the conflict, and with less happy results, the writer will adopt the language of another venerable authority, well worthy of attention now that our own primate has shown a disposition to lend them his friendly assistance and co-operation. "There are not many persons," said one of his most distinguished predecessors[1], "who have a deeper or more tender resentment than I have of the sad and deplorable state of the reformed churches in some parts of the continent of Europe: and I should count it my joy and the crown of my rejoicing, if I could contribute any thing, besides my daily prayers (may God look to it, and require of me, as I speak!) towards restoring and advancing them to a yet better condition. . . . . But, whatever becomes of any particular scheme, I can by no means, as our brethren seem to do, give up the whole Protestant cause at once, as lost and desperate, and ready to breathe its last. No! God hath by the Reformation kindled and set up a light in Christendom, which, I am fully persuaded, shall never be extinguished. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but the word of the Lord endureth for ever: and this is the word which hath been preached among us. Only let them that suffer according to the will of God, commit the keeping of their souls to Him in well-doing; let them adore the unsearchable depths of His wise providence; who, when all our fine policies are baffled and defeated, will take the matter in His own hands, and perfect what concerns us in a way we think not of. For His is the kingdom and the power; to Him be the glory for ever."

[1] Abp. Sancroft. *Life*, by D'Oyly, i. 198, 201.

CHAPTER II.

WYCLIFFE AND POPE GREGORY XI.

A good man ther was of religioun,
That was a pouré[1] persone of a toun;
But rich he was of holy thought and werk.
He was also a lerned man, a clerk,
That Christé's gospel trewely woldé preche.
His parishens devoutly wolde he teche.—CHAUCER.

IT was towards the end of the long reign of Edward III. that the stir began in England, which afterwards extended to almost every part of Europe, against the papal power,—that power which had for three centuries ruled supreme in the Western Church, and, aided at first by public opinion, afterwards strengthened by policy and arms, had often maintained a successful struggle against the kingly crown. The period was one remarkable for great corruption of morals and general discontent. The court was profligate; the people were poor and oppressed. The glories of Edward's French war had faded; and the hopes of the nation were suddenly extinguished by the death of the Black Prince. The zeal and devotion which had animated the rude breasts of the crusaders was now forgotten; the spirit of chivalry, which had succeeded, and kept alive at least the soldier's virtues, was passing fast away. The bonds of government were loosened; armed factions and turbulent nobles harassed the state, and gave omen of those long and grievous civil wars, which in the following century so often desolated the face of England, and shed the best blood of her people like water on the earth.

At this period, A.D. 1377, there had arisen at Oxford a scholar in the science of theology, a plain north-

[1] A poor parish priest.

country man, who had for some time attracted great notice, and drawn many disciples after him, by teaching publicly in the schools and elsewhere the following determinations and conclusions:—

"1. That the Church of Rome is not the head of all churches any more than any other church; and that no more power was given by Christ to St. Peter than to any other apostle.

"2. That the Pope of Rome has no more power in binding or loosing men's sins than any other bishop or priest.

"3. That no bishop or priest ought to excommunicate or use any ecclesiastical censure, in revenge for injuries done to himself or others, but only in the cause of God; and that no man is the worse for excommunication, unless he is first and principally excommunicated by himself.

"4. That temporal lords and governors of state have the power of taking away the goods of fortune from a delinquent church; and that in certain cases they may lawfully and meritoriously do so.

"5. That the Gospel is sufficient as a rule of life in this world, for any Christian; and that all the other rules invented by holy men, observed by the different religious orders, add nothing of perfection to the Gospel.

"6. That neither the Pope nor any other prelate ought to have prisons for the punishment of offenders against church-discipline; but that such offenders ought to be left to their personal liberty[1]."

It has seldom happened that any great impulse has been given to the public mind, unless the course of events, some common feeling of grievances, or desire of change, has paved the way for it. Then some master-spirit, embracing with keener perception the prevailing mood, embodies the general sentiment, and seems to

[1] WALSINGHAM, ed. Camden, p. 191. A few portions of his statements are here corrected by comparing them with Wycliffe's own writings.

lead the opinions of which he is in fact the representative. The power of such a man depends as much upon the agreement of his own views with the pulse of the times, as upon his genius or skill in maintaining them. Such a man in his time was JOHN WYCLIFFE, a time of which it has been said, with too much severity, but not without a certain amount of truth, that "the only name of Christ remained among Christians, but his true and lively doctrine was as far unknown unto the most part, as his name was common unto all men." The minds of high and low were beginning to awake to a sense of the strange encroachments of a foreign jurisdiction; which, under pretence of asserting the liberties of the Church, had broken the sacred ties between the subject and his sovereign, had taken away the plainest duties of obedience to the laws, and not only levied taxes in other realms, but now began to put forth its hand against the liberty and even the life of private men. It was now about eleven years since Pope Urban V.—a pope of English extraction, being the son of William Grisant, an English physician of the same name which he bore—had sent to give notice to King Edward III. that he intended to cite him to his court to answer for his neglect in not doing homage, as King John had done, to the see of Rome for his crown, and for not paying the tribute of seven hundred marks which John had covenanted to pay. The king asked the advice of his parliament; and their answer was befitting the council of a free and independent nation; —"that King John had no right to dispose of his crown, or subject it to such bondage; that the peers of England had no share in that proceeding, which was in violation of his coronation-oath; and that the demand should be resisted by every means—by force and arms, if necessary." It must needs seem strange how it had come to such a pass that a foreign bishop, and but lately a poor monk—for such was Urban, should have made so preposterous a claim, and from a monarch who was apparently his natural sovereign. But there were

other monks in England, who presumed on their immunity, to defend this claim, looking probably to gain promotion to themselves, or favour to their order, from the papal court. On this occasion Wycliffe is said first to have distinguished himself as a disputant against one of these teachers, though he was aware of the danger he incurred. Having therefore first professed himself a humble and obedient son of the Roman Church, he set forth an answer, A.D. 1367, in the form of a debate in the House of Lords, in which he put into the mouths of several lords the reasons why the realm of England should not pay this tribute to the Pope, and declared that such a claim "could never be proved either reasonable or honest, before the day should come when all exaction should be at an end."

Wycliffe had been distinguished at Oxford while yet a young man, by a book called *The last Age of the Church*, in which, about A.D. 1356, he had interpreted the prevailing miseries as the signs of the approaching termination of the world. He was a master in all the learning then in vogue, had committed to memory the abstruser parts of Aristotle, and was gifted with remarkable eloquence; but his best distinction at a time when the study of Thomas Aquinas had almost superseded that of the Holy Scriptures in the schools, was that he should have obtained the title of the "Evangelical Doctor," according to the pedantic fashion of designating celebrated scholars according to any peculiar excellence which they were thought to possess. About A.D. 1361 he was chosen master of Balliol College, and in A.D. 1372 he became a Doctor or Professor of Divinity, a rank less common then than it has since become, and which entitled all who attained it to read lectures on divinity in the schools.

This designation of Professor of Divinity has led most of his biographers to describe him as having been then appointed to some such high office as that which is now known as a Regius Professorship. But there is no reason to suppose that it was anything more than

what is now called taking a Doctor's degree, though it is obvious that such a degree was at that time reserved to distinguished merit, and conferred some such privileges as now belong to a professorship.

Wycliffe[1] was not slow to avail himself of the influence derived from his position at Oxford. He was now forty-eight years of age, and had been known as a vehement declaimer against the abuses of the Church for at least sixteen years, that is, since the publication of his *Last Age of the Church*. Yet he was so far from having lost credit by the course he had adopted, that we shall find reason to believe that almost the whole University approved his conduct. Nor was his fame confined to the schools of Oxford. Later in life, when his writings had been pronounced heretical by the authorities of the Church, but few of the great ones of the earth were found to countenance him. But now his indignant sentiments were echoed by the general feeling, and he was selected with Gilbert, bishop of Bangor, to proceed on an embassy to the Pope, to represent the complaints of the English parliament against the enormous encroachments of the papal power. That his conduct in this embassy was satisfactory to his employers, appears from the fact of his having been presented by the king, A.D. 1375, to the rectory of Lutterworth, and to a prebend in the collegiate church of Westbury, and he was also chaplain to the king. His colleague, on the other hand, seems to have given more satisfaction to the Pope, by whom he was promoted successively to the bishopries of Hereford and St. David's, as it were in defiance of that very remonstrance against such "Provisions" which he had been deputed to convey.

There is reason to believe that this "Evangelical

[1] The spelling of the Reformer's name has been adopted, because it is the name of the village in Teesdale where he was probably born. The last male descendant of the family, who had the same name and spelt it thus, died a few years since at Richmond, in Yorkshire.

Doctor" had not yet ventured to impugn the received opinions on any point of faith. It is, indeed, supposed from internal evidence, that a treatise of his on the Ten Commandments, designed for the instruction of the common people, and called the *Poor Caitiff*, was written, at latest, soon after he became a Professor of Divinity. But the account of his opinions about this time transmitted to the Pope, contained no allusion to the sacramental controversy. We may therefore conclude with sufficient certainty that he had as yet confined himself to denouncing the papal power, and the general corruption of the Church.

But this was offence enough. An outcry was raised against him, especially by the parties who seemed to be chiefly attacked, the members of the different religious orders. Such doctrines were declared to be subversive of the Christian faith, heretical, and contrary to the determinations of the universal Church, and full of venom against the monks and their possessions. Gregory XI. therefore issued his bulls, directed to the Chancellor and University of Oxford, and others to the Archbishop of Canterbury and Bishop of London, to urge proceedings against him. There is something so striking in the imperious tone of these bulls, that it may be well to give some parts of the first of them at length :—

" Gregory the Bishop, servant of the servants of God, to our beloved sons the Chancellor and all the university of students at Oxford, health and the apostolical benediction. Needs must we be grieved and surprised, that you, who are, as it were, sailing in the open sea, with God to aid, with so many graces and privileges granted to your Oxford school by the apostolic see, and with such knowledge of the Scriptures,—you who ought to be strong champions of the orthodox faith, the only health of souls, should suffer tares to grow among the pure wheat of the field of your glorious school. This alone is a proof of indolence and sloth, that you suffer them to shoot and grow; it is still more pernicious, that you suffer them to run to seed, and take no

pains to root them up, tarnishing the brightness of your good name, periling your souls, shewing your contempt for the Roman Church, and bringing harm upon the faith. And, what torments us worse than all, we feel the increase of these tares at Rome, before you seem to be sensible of it in England. But it is in England that the remedy should be applied. It has been whispered in our ears, by many credible persons, who were grieved to report such things, that John Wycliffe, rector of Lutterworth, in the diocese of Lincoln, professor of theology,—(would that we were not compelled to add also, a master-teacher of errors!) —has burst forth into such detestable madness as to put forth certain erroneous and false propositions and conclusions, savouring of heretical pravity, and plainly tending to subvert and weaken not only the constitution of the Church, but also the system of government of the state.

"Wherefore, considering that if such fatal pestilent opinions be not checked in their beginnings, and plucked out by the roots, it may be too late hereafter to prepare medicines, when a great number are infected with the contagion, we could not endure, as indeed we ought not, to shut our eyes, and suffer them to pass unnoticed. And we charge and command your whole university strictly, by these our apostolic letters, in virtue of your holy obedience, and under penalty of deprivation of all the graces, indulgences, and privileges granted to you and to your school by the said apostolic see,—that hereafter you do not suffer persons to assert or put forth such conclusions and propositions, expressing bad sentiments in regard to good works as well as faith, however the proposers may attempt to defend them by nice and difficult arguments, and abuse of words and terms. And as to the said John Wycliffe, we enjoin by our authority, that you apprehend him, or cause him to be apprehended, and deliver him to be kept in safe custody to our venerable brothers, the Archbishop of Canterbury and Bishop of London, or either of them. And

if, which God forbid, there shall be in your university, subject to your jurisdiction, any who are corrupted with such errors, and who shall obstinately persist in them, that you apprehend and deliver up these gainsayers also to the same custody. This, if you shall do, and in other respects proceed with firmness and circumspection, so as to make up for your lack of diligence in what has passed, ye shall obtain grace and kindness from ourselves and the apostolic see, and the reward and favour of Divine recompense.

"Given at Rome, at Santa Maria Maggiore, in the seventh year of our pontificate, May 22, 1377."

Of three other rescripts, addressed to the Archbishop of Canterbury and Bishop of London, the first directed them to warn the old King Edward, with Joan of Kent, the widow of the Black Prince, and the peers of England, of the danger and disgrace impending on the devout realm of England from Wycliffe's doctrines, which, it affirmed, were not only full of error as regarded the faith, but, if well noted, would appear destructive of all civil government. They were therefore to charge these princes and peers very earnestly to help them in the task of rooting out such perilous doctrines.

The second, addressed to the same parties, enclosed a copy of several propositions and conclusions, which Wycliffe was accused of having taught; and directed them, if they found this information correct, to have him apprehended and imprisoned, to examine him upon all the points mentioned in the enclosed paper, and having taken down his answers to send them under seal to the court of Rome. Further, to guard against a difficulty which the Pope's own entangled laws had introduced, and to prevent his own authority from being pleaded against himself, Gregory now suspended, in this case, all privileges and exemptions granted by former pontiffs to the four orders of friars, and other orders, and colleges or chapters of priests and monks, not knowing whether the accused might take the benefit of any of

these to withdraw himself from the archbishop's jurisdiction. And because a law of Boniface VIII. had directed that no person should be tried by an ecclesiastical court out of his own diocese, and Wycliffe was in the diocese of Lincoln, in which Oxford, as well as Lutterworth, was then situated, the Pope, either distrusting the Bishop of Lincoln[1] or the University of Oxford, suspended this law also.

By a further document it was provided, that in case the culprit should not be found, they should cite him by public edict, to be set forth in Oxford and throughout the diocese, to appear within three months from the day of citation. But whether he should come to answer or not, they were to give notice in the edict, that the Pope would proceed upon the articles exhibited, and pronounce his condemnation on every point, "as his demerits shall require, and the interests of the faith shall seem to render most expedient." Such was the kind of trial to which this Italian prelate destined an English clergyman and subject of the English crown.

When these bulls arrived in England, the Oxford men were in no haste to act upon that which fell to their share. The heads of colleges and the proctors met together, and debated whether they should receive it with outward marks of respect, or refuse it not without some appearance of contempt. The former counsel seems to have prevailed; but after the admission of the paper into their conclave, it was laid upon the table, and no measure was founded upon it.

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Simon Sudbury, a wise and moderate man, was also slow in executing these strong mandates. It seems probable that he was in some points agreed with Wycliffe, though he was far from liking all his doctrines or proceedings. It was in the year 1370, that he, who was then Bishop of London, happened to be travelling towards Canterbury,

[1] John Buckingham, a plain, unlearned man, who afterwards retired into a monastery.

at a time when the Pope had ordered a jubilee in honour of Becket, and had offered a plenary indulgence to all who should visit his shrine on the festival kept in remembrance of the translation of his bones. Sudbury, who, like many good men in those times, lamented the excess of these popular superstitions, seeing the crowds who thronged the road, said to them, "My friends, this plenary indulgence, which you hope to find at Canterbury, will avail you nothing." Such words, from a man so respected, attracted much attention; and some of the pilgrims, perhaps after further conversation with him, actually turned back from their expedition. But others were sorely offended, and followed him with curses and revilings; among whom, Sir Thomas Aldon, a knight of Kent, made himself conspicuous, by riding up to him, and saying, "Lord Bishop, for this division that you have made in the people against St. Thomas, on my soul you will die an ill death,"—words which the monks, or other superstitious persons, pretended to consider as prophetic, when several years afterwards this prelate, for the firm and faithful counsel which he gave to Richard II., (which was the means of preserving the young king's life,) fell a victim to the fury of the misguided populace in Wat Tyler's insurrection.

Sudbury, therefore, suffered some months to elapse before he took any step in compliance with the Pope's letters[1]. But Gregory seems to have known that he should find a more efficient delegate in William Courtney, then bishop of London, whose name he had joined in the commission. Courtney had been at an early age a diligent student both of the common and the canon-law, which was the best road to preferment in those days, whether from the royal or the papal court. He took the degree of doctor in civil law at Oxford; and, entering holy orders, was very soon enriched with three pre-

[1] It is by no means probable that these bulls should have been six months on their way from Rome to England, as Lewis supposes. The journey at that time was performed within two months.

bendal stalls, at York, Exeter, and Wells, and a few livings besides. He was made bishop of Hereford A.D. 1369, by a provision of Pope Urban V.; and Gregory himself had aided his translation to London, when Sudbury was by the king's interest made primate. By his means, it seems probable, a mandate was at length issued by the Archbishop in their joint names, addressed to the University of Oxford, and after reciting the charges against Wycliffe from the Pope's letters, requiring them to cite him to appear within thirty days to answer to the accusation at a court to be held by the two prelates, or their delegates, in the chapter-house of St. Paul's. They were directed, at the same time, to employ some scholars in theology, of good repute for Catholic sentiments, to collect information, which they should transmit under seal to the court, about the propositions enclosed in the Pope's letter. The mandate, however, contained no such order as the Pope had directed for the imprisonment of Wycliffe, and it shows that some good had already resulted from the recent statute of *præmunire*, which made it highly penal to execute a papal bull without license from the crown[1]. The date of this mandate was December 18, 1377[2].

At the very period of the meeting of this court before which Wycliffe was cited, there was no want of proof that the current of opinion was in his favour. The first parliament of Richard II., which had met at the same time, addressed the crown with a prayer, that the Pope

---

[1] A few years later than this Sir W. Brian was committed to the Tower for publishing a bull or brief of the Pope's against some persons who had broken into his house and stolen his papers. Evidently his offence was acknowledging a foreign jurisdiction.

[2] Walsingham says it was after the receipt of the bulls that Wycliffe was made to appear at St. Paul's (p. 191); though he relates the occurrence as before the death of Edward III., June 21, 1377, which was pretty certainly before the bulls arrived in England. This neglect of chronology in Walsingham has led later writers into a mistake, as they speak of Wycliffe's summons as before the issuing of the bulls.

might not be allowed to take the firstfruits of vacant benefices; that no English subject should be suffered to procure a benefice by provision from Rome; and that no Englishman should take a lease or farm of any benefice held by a foreigner, under pain of being outlawed. They also prayed that all foreigners holding preferments in England might be compelled to relinquish them within three months, and the revenues arising from them be employed in paying the expenses of the French war, till that war was concluded. The ground for this last demand was, that the popes, who had during this century resided for near seventy years at Avignon, in France, had shown themselves partial towards French interests; and it was supposed that the treasure exported by their nominees contributed to supply the French with resources for war.

Wycliffe made his appearance before the convocation at St. Paul's, which met, together with the parliament, in February, 1378. The tumultuary scene which followed is characteristic alike of the age and of the parties concerned. Wycliffe had become known to John of Gaunt while employed on his embassy to the Pope, and this prince had some personal feeling against the bishops, besides the general disgust which high-minded and chivalrous men would feel at the encroachments of the papal power. He determined to accompany the Reformer when he went before the synod, and he came attended by Henry Lord Percy, lately advanced by his influence to the office of earl marshal, afterwards created Earl of Northumberland, and the father of the famous Henry Hotspur. A great crowd of people were pressing into the court, and some angry words passed between Bishop Courtney and the duke. For Courtney, who besides the blood of his own ancient and royal house, was descended, on his mother's side, from the kings of England, was not disposed to quail before the presence even of such noble intruders. He told the earl marshal, as he saw him moving the crowd aside, that "if he had known what mastery he would have kept in the church, he

would have stopped him out from coming there." This led to a fierce reply from the prince, who heard it; and the feelings of both sides were still further excited, when Percy afterwards in the court called to Wycliffe to be seated, and the bishop, justly offended at such interference with the authority of the judges, declared he should not sit there. In the heat which ensued, the duke said, in very threatening language, that he would bring down his pride, and the pride of all the prelacy of England; he supposed the bishop presumed upon the nobility of his parents; "but," said he, "they shall not help thee; they shall have enough to do to help themselves." To which the prelate returned a becoming answer, that his confidence was not in his parents, nor in any man else, but in God alone, who, he trusted, would give him courage to speak the truth. The prince found no reply; but presently whispered to one that sat next him, in a tone loud enough to be heard, that sooner than endure what he had received from him, he would drag the bishop from the church by the hair of his head. This unmanly insult was so resented by the London citizens, though they were otherwise favourably disposed to Wycliffe, that, amidst the clamour that was raised, the court broke up in disorder. Some of the populace, with whom John of Gaunt was never popular, went that same evening to burn or plunder his palace at the Savoy; but Courtney, having timely notice of it, hastened to the spot, and by his interference prevented the outrage.

The bishops, dissatisfied with the disorderly termination of their proceedings, and fearing that Wycliffe, presuming on the support of these powerful peers, would not comply with their injunction, or perhaps having been informed that he disregarded it, summoned him to another court which was shortly after held at Lambeth. The Londoners on this occasion are said to have shown so much boisterous zeal for his cause, as to have penetrated into Lambeth Chapel, and some of them to have addressed the prelates sitting there in his

favour. But he had a still more powerful advocate in the widow of the Black Prince, the young king's mother, who sent Sir Lewis Clifford, afterwards a known favourer of Wycliffe's principles, with a message to the court, desiring them not to proceed further, nor pronounce any sentence on the accused. Upon which they again dismissed him with only a reprimand.

Much indignation is expressed by the historians of the time, who were most attached to the papal interest, at what they considered the poor-spirited conduct of the bishops on this occasion. But probably they may have taken a more just and constitutional view of their own responsibility than has been supposed. The Pope's bull for Wycliffe's imprisonment had not been confirmed by the king's warrant, and the statute of *præmunire* subjected them to the severest penalties, if they acknowledged a mandate from Rome without the royal license. The princess, in the childhood of her son, would have something of the authority of regent; and if the message which she sent was a refusal to grant this license, it follows that they had no power to go beyond a spiritual censure. We shall see hereafter how those churchmen, who were bent upon trying the plan of persecution, succeeded at length in obtaining this power from the crown.

Wycliffe defended himself before these courts with much adroitness, and with something of that metaphysical subtlety for which he had been noted at Oxford. Two papers have come down to us, differing a little from each other, in which he goes through the several propositions objected to by the Pope, and offers his explanation of them. These propositions, eighteen in number, all relate to the right by which the Church held her temporal possessions, the power of excommunication as then exercised by popes and prelates, the different orders of the ministry, and the prerogatives of the see of Rome. With respect to the first, he had said, as the original endowment of the Church was an alms-deed, or work of mercy, it might in certain cases

be equally an alms-deed to withhold its revenues from a delinquent church, or, as he had expressed himself elsewhere, from churchmen who habitually abuse them. In calling church-property by the name of *alms*, he only used the common name applied to it by old custom in England[1]. He now explained himself to mean that this was only to be done in cases specified both by the civil and the canon-law; namely, that if a beneficed clergyman wasted and dilapidated the endowments of his living, it was the business of the patron to give information to the bishop or ecclesiastical judge; if the bishop was neglectful of his duty, then to apply to the archbishop; and lastly, if nothing was done, to complain to the king. And in such cases the law gave the king power, limited by law, to sequester the living during the incumbent's life, but after his death it was to return to his successor.

On the second point, he had said that excommunication does no harm, unless he be first and principally excommunicated by himself. In defence of this he quoted the text from Isaiah, lix. 2, *Your iniquities have separated between you and your God;* from which he argued that nothing but sin could cut a man off from the Divine assistance. Therefore, if cursing or excommunication should be denounced against a man who was not an adversary of the law of Christ, it could have no force: for *if God justifieth, who is he that shall condemn?* There were several propositions, all bearing on this subject, and evidently tending to shake the pre-

[1] One instance may suffice, recorded by Gyraldus Cambrensis. Owen Cevelioc, a Welsh prince of Powys-Land, was one day dining with Henry II. at Shrewsbury. The king, as a mark of friendship usual in those days, sent him a loaf from his own hand. Owen cut it up into fragments, and laid it out like alms-bread, or doles to be distributed to the poor, but afterwards took back the pieces and swallowed them one by one. When the king asked him his meaning, he said, alluding to Henry's appropriations of church-preferments to his own use, "I am only calling in my *alms*, as the king does his."

vailing doctrines of the Pope's power to bind or loose as he pleased, forgetting that the power of Christ's vicar could only be effectual if exercised in compliance with the will of Christ. "There is no Christian," he said, "who may not in this act of excommunication err widely from that purity which will be found in a member of the Church triumphant hereafter. But if he so errs, he does not then bind or loose, as he pretends. And it seems to me that he who should usurp to himself such power, would be that *man of sin* mentioned in 2 Thess. ii. 3, 4, *sitting in the temple of God, and shewing himself as if he were God.*" He also blamed those who used such a weapon as excommunication against the withholders of church-dues. This was a very common practice in those times; but what did it prove, said Wycliffe, but that men valued their personal convenience above the honour of God, and thought the loss of a few temporalities more important than the interest of the Church? Christ would not suffer his disciples to call down fire from heaven on those who refused him hospitality (Luke ix. 55). This sentence ought never to be passed but in charity to the offender, for his spiritual correction, not for revenge. And the vicar of Christ ought to be moved by charity towards his neighbour more than by a love for any temporal good that this world can give.

On the third point he had affirmed, that any priest rightly ordained has power to administer all the sacraments, and therefore to give absolution for any sin to a contrite penitent. It would seem that he thought there was no difference in the power of orders between bishops and presbyters; and that, therefore, except that this was otherwise directed for convenience by the laws of the Church, priests might administer confirmation, and ordain other priests and deacons. He defended this view on the authority of Hugh de St. Victor, a famous doctor of Paris, who lived about two centuries before, and left many writings. He might also have defended it on the authority of Elfric, the great teacher

of the later Anglo-Saxon church, who held that the difference between bishops and priests is one of jurisdiction, and not of orders. But other Anglo-Saxon authorities speak of bishops as a distinct order; and this is clearly the doctrine of the primitive Church.

On the fourth point, the prerogatives and power of the see of Rome, he had said, that though all the world should agree together till the coming of Christ to give St. Peter's successors political dominion, it could not last for ever. When he was asked to explain this, he said that though the term "for ever" often occurred in deeds and charters of inheritance, still such perpetuity must have a limit. For at least all civil property must end before the end of the world; and he who believes the article of the creed that Christ shall come to judge the quick and the dead, must believe the truth of this proposition. There is an appearance of banter in this explanation; and it is perhaps to this and one or two similar passages that Walsingham refers, when he says, with hearty good spite, of Wycliffe, "the double-dealing hypocrite put a good meaning into his abominable propositions."

He had said also that any churchman, even the Pope of Rome himself, may in certain cases be corrected by his subjects, and be brought to trial, for the good of the Church, by either clergy or laity. This proposition was naturally very unpalatable at Rome. But it was not very difficult for Wycliffe to defend it in point of fact by referring to instances, in the chronicles of former ages, of popes who had been deposed by the authority of princes. As to the reasons for it, he said with some grave humour: "It is not to be doubted but that the pope is capable of sinning, since he is one of Adam's race; I do not say capable of committing the sin against the Holy Ghost, for I would not mention this under the respect we all feel for the sanctity, humility, and reverend character of so eminent a father in the Church. But, as one of our brethren, he is liable to fall into sin, and therefore subject to the law of brotherly reproof

(Lev. xix. 17). And therefore if at any time the college of cardinals are remiss in correcting him for the welfare of the Church, it is plain that the rest of the body, which *possibly may be* chiefly composed of laymen, may medicinally reprove him, and accuse him, and reduce him to live a better life. And though we ought not to suppose the lord pope guilty of any great fall from rectitude without clear evidence, yet it is not to be presumed possible, that if he does fall, he will be further guilty of so much obstinacy as not humbly to accept a cure from his prince, who is his superior in the sight of God. God forbid," he adds at the conclusion of his paper, "that this truth should be condemned by the Church of Christ, because it sounds ill in the ears of sinners and ignorant persons; for by this rule the whole faith of Scripture might be liable to be condemned."

Wycliffe professes, at the beginning of his defence, his determination to live and die, under the grace of God, a sound Christian, and to defend the law of Christ with all the sufficiency he has, to his last breath. If in ignorance or from any other cause he may have failed, he asks pardon of God, and is ready to retract, submitting himself to the correction of the Church. But he complains that his sentiments have been conveyed to Rome "by boys and worse than boys," who misrepresented what they did not understand. And it is most probable that, as often happens in controversy, these propositions were taken by themselves, and made to wear a different sense from what he intended when he delivered them. However, it was not likely that the contest would end with this trial, which seems only to have excited the spirits of both parties; and both Courtney and the parson of Lutterworth were soon to appear in other scenes, one against the other.

His position in the meanwhile, though he escaped for the present, was now full of danger. For although the bishops had not as yet any coercive power, except what the Pope might pretend to give them, the king might order the execution of a convicted heretic, and it was

evident that the whole power of the Pope was bent on his conviction. But in this same year in which he appeared before the convocation at Lambeth, Pope Gregory XI. died, and his death, which probably put an end to their commission, was followed by that schism in the papacy which will shortly be mentioned as marking an era in the history of the Church.

CHAPTER III.

RISE AND PROGRESS OF THE PAPAL POWER.—SCHISM OF THE POPES, A.D. 1378.

> Rome, in happier time,
> Had turn'd the world to good; and her twin powers
> Were like two suns, whose several beams cast light
> On either path, th' imperial rule and God's.
> Now one hath quench'd the other, and the sword
> Join'd with the pastoral staff: ill fare they both,
> Their own due honour lost, their right fear dead.—DANTE.

LET any unbiassed reader peruse a narrative of the scenes recorded in the preceding chapter, and he can only come to the conclusion, that the times were strangely out of joint, that both Church and State were wonderfully misgoverned, and each was acting out of its proper province. The fact of a bishop of a remote diocese in a foreign country having sent out what may be called a warrant for the apprehension of an English clergyman, having ordered him to be imprisoned, directed the form of trial, and pre-ordained the sentence which was to be pronounced against him, is so utterly opposed to all just law, spiritual or civil, that if one did not allow for the influence of opinion, one should suppose that such an experiment on English patience would be treated with contempt. On the other hand, since it is plain that, in any rightly constituted Church, the bishops ought to exercise the right of hearing charges against presbyters who give offence by their life or doctrine (1 Timothy v. 19, 20), and of imposing silence on those who teach heresies (Titus i. 10, 11); it follows that nothing could have been more irregular than the interference of the Duke of Lancaster and Lord Percy, if Sudbury and Courtney had intended only to pass a

spiritual censure on Wycliffe, and if their mandate had not been issued in obedience to a foreign jurisdiction. Even as it was, their interference was so disorderly, as by no means to carry the appearance of an act of the civil power, having much more the character of a factious tumult excited by those nobles.

The inquiry which such a narrative suggests is, "How did things arrive at this state of mutual conflict and distrust? how were the popes thus enabled to set up in every land, and especially in this country, a separate kingdom and laws of their own?" There is no question that the Church in this island was originally independent of Rome. It is not pretended that the British Christians acknowledged any foreign jurisdiction in the government of their churches before the Saxon conquest. When Augustine was sent by Gregory to convert the heathen Saxons, and planted Christianity among a new people, the case was a little different. Thenceforth the Church of England owed so much respect to Rome as is due from a daughter to a mother church. The Bishop of Rome was to the Church in England what the Archbishop of Canterbury is now to the Church in the British colonies, a patriarch and a founder. We can afford to be thankful to the memory of Gregory the Great, as his virtues deserve; nor was there any reason why the Saxon archbishops might not continue to receive the pall, the ensign of their dignity, from his successors. The election of the English prelates was freely conducted by the Church at home; the unity of the Church was unbroken, and the Roman bishop, as patriarch of Western Europe, presided among his equals, not as a lord from whom their right to their sees or their power to govern was derived.

It is by the good providence of God that St. Gregory has left on record his sentiments on this point, in the protest which he made against his contemporary, John, patriarch of Constantinople, for assuming the title of universal bishop. It is true, some of his successors soon began to take this title to themselves; but in this

they were no more like him, than his namesake, who condemned Wycliffe's doctrine about excommunication; on which St. Gregory's doctrine was, that "the priest who binds and looses for his own pleasure, and not for the moral benefit of the people, deprives himself of all power to do either[1]."

Again, as to independence on the civil power, this good man speaks of his own elevation to the bishopric as received from the Grecian emperor, to whom Rome was then subject[2]. And if the emperor should think fit to depose a bishop, he says, a subject has no choice but to obey: if it is done where no law of the Church requires it, he must bear it as he can[3]. There is no pope of Rome whose doctrine the Church of England is more bound to respect than the first Gregory's; and it does not seem that in this point either Wycliffe or the later doctors of the Church have departed from his teaching.

How, then, did so great a change come over the Christian world, that such sentiments as these subjected their proposer to prosecution? And how did the popes find a pretence for the assumption of powers unknown in better times?

In order to understand the progress of those innovations by which this state of things had been brought about, it will be useful to have a definite notion of the several steps in that progress, and the periods to which they belong. The time between the Norman Conquest and the separation of the English Church from the see of Rome under Henry VIII., may be conveniently divided into three periods. The first period, of about a century and a half, during which the papal power was advancing to its highest point, may be considered as extending from the papacy of Gregory VII., or the era of the Conquest, to the reign of King John, or the papacy of Innocent III., A.D. 1199. The second period

[1] St. Gregory, *Homil.* xxvi. [2] B. i. Epist. 5.
[3] B. ix. Epist. 41.

may be reckoned from the papacy of Innocent to the beginning of the schism in the Western Church on the appointment of two rival popes, A.D. 1378, a year after the accession of Richard II., or, more conveniently, though less accurately, by the termination of the dynasty of King John's rightful heirs, on the deposition of Richard II., A.D. 1399, thus comprising the whole of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. It is during this second period that the papal power and corruptions may be considered to be at their height. The last period, from the end of the fourteenth century to the time of Henry VIII., is that during which the conflict of opinions was preparing the way for reformation, an age of persecution for the party who desired change, but in which their views were constantly gaining ground, till the Church was eventually reformed.

We have the authority of a most eminent Italian writer, that until the time of Theodoric, king of Lombardy, the pope was so far from being the lord of Christendom, that he was hardly acknowledged to have any superiority, even in causes ecclesiastical, above the Church of Ravenna, a neighbouring city[1]. But it was not long after this period, and more than two centuries since the death of the first Gregory, when the world first heard of the Decretal Epistles, since notorious as the *Forged Decretals*. The writings purporting to express the sentiments of the early Church are of three kinds: the Apostolical Canons: the Apostolical Constitutions: and the Decretal Epistles. The first are not indeed supposed to have been drawn up by the apostles, but they are understood to be recognised by all the early councils, and so far are undoubtedly genuine[2]. The Apostolical Constitutions profess to have been set forth by the apostles in council, Clement of Rome acting as notary. This is not supposed to be the fact,

[1] Macchiavelli. It is said that Guicciardi expressed the same in his fourth book, but that it was erased.

[2] MANSI. *Conc.*, i. p. 3.

but these also are universally acknowledged as an authentic exposition of apostolical practice[1]. In neither of these documents is there any trace of the primacy of St. Peter. But the third authority, the Decretal Epistles, in which this claim is manifestly asserted, is undoubtedly a forgery, and forged for the purpose of promoting this primacy at the time when it began to be asserted. They profess to be the decrees and letters of the earlier bishops of Rome, recorded in the pontifical books of Pope Damasus, and extending from the time of St. Clement, the companion of St. Paul, A.D. 69–83, to the time of a pope named Deusdedit, in A.D. 614. The design of them is to prove, by the supposed testimonies of these earlier bishops, that all the world had then allowed the Church of Rome to be, in virtue of our Lord's promise to St. Peter, the chief of all churches; that all other bishoprics in the world were founded from Rome, and that this parent Church had the care of all the flock of Christ; that no council could give or take away these rights; that no earthly power in Church or State could judge the Roman bishop; and that whatever was done in the Church by princes, bishops, or councils, had no force without his sanction.

This forgery is said to have been brought out of Spain by an ecclesiastic named Isodorus Peccator[2]: but it was copied into the records of the Church of Metz by a deacon named Benedict Levita, under the authority of its bishop, Riculfus, who presided over that see from A.D. 787 to 814. It was about A.D. 836 that it attracted general attention, and in the year 865 Pope Nicholas I., in a contest with the Gallican church, appealed to these decrees as genuine, and insisted on their authority[3]. From this time they seem to have

[1] MANSI. *Conc.*, i. p. 254.

[2] *Hincmar. Opusc.*, c. 24, quoted in LABBE, tom. i. p. 78.

[3] *Nichol., Ep.* 42, quoted in LABBE, *ubi supra.* The learned Labbe and Cosart, in their notice of this forgery, thus express their wonder that any one should defend the authenticity of these

been received without question, and thus it came to pass that all the authority they assign to the papal chair was supposed throughout the middle ages to be supported by primitive practice.

The troubled state of Italy for a long time after the death of Nicholas, gave the popes more than enough to do at home. The see became a prey to lawless princes and barons, who made and unmade bishops at will[1]; and then fell under the oppressive power of the foreign emperors of Germany. The most unfit and unworthy men were, with few exceptions, placed in St. Peter's chair, till the time of the famous Hildebrand.

Hildebrand Hildebrandini, who became pope A.D. 1073, by the name of Gregory VII., was of very humble origin; his father is said to have been a smith or carpenter at Saona, in Tuscany. In early years, having come to Rome and studied to accomplish himself for the priestly office, he found his spirit stirred within him by the sight of the prevailing corruptions. The clergy were living in great ignorance and immorality, and the episcopal office had become a matter of common traffic, a source of revenue to weak and abandoned princes, who disposed of it to the best bidder, with a total disregard of the character of those to whom

---

epistles. "Adeo enim perspicacibus viris deformis videntur, hoc saltem tempore, ut nullâ arte, nullâ purpurissâ fucari possint." (tom. i. p. 78.) A modern writer, who admits indeed their falsehood, asserts that it is false that Nicholas I. *declared* them to be genuine. (PALMA. *Prælect. Hist. Eccl.*, tom. ii. pt. 2.) This is at best *suppressio veri*. The professor well knows that Nicholas I. *appealed* to them as genuine, which served his purpose much better than declaring them to be so.

[1] Of these times, their great historian Baronius thus complains:—"Quam fœdissima Ecclesiæ Romanæ facies, quum Romæ dominarentur potentissimæ æquè ac sordidissimæ meretrices, quarum arbitrio mutarentur sedes, darentur episcopi, et quod auditu horrendum et infandum est, intruderentur in sedem Petri earum amasii pseudo-pontifices qui non sunt nisi ad consignanda tantum tempora in catalogo Romanorum pontificum scripti."—BARONIUS, An. 912, num. 14.

it fell. The talents of Hildebrand soon recommended him to notice; and for many years before he was himself raised to the papacy, he was employed by several popes in succession to fill high offices of trust, and administer the government. In these offices he laboured unweariedly to carry out the principles of the "False Decretals," and saw in them the only way of redress for the evils of the time. And seeing that the world cannot be governed while two rival authorities are at strife with each other, he was not content with asserting the independent power of the Church, but maintained its supremacy, as one to which all temporal sovereignties were subject. The pope, according to his doctrine, derived a kind of hereditary holiness from St. Peter, and could not err in his decisions; therefore no man could be a Catholic, unless he agreed in all things with the Church of Rome. And holding, as it would seem, that a departure from Catholic truth was a forfeiture of all right to temporal sway, he followed up these principles by asserting the pope's power to absolve subjects from their obedience, if their prince was not obedient to the laws of Holy Church; and in his contest with the rash and violent Emperor Henry IV., he showed that he was not slow to exert this power.

The character of Gregory VII. was well suited for the work he took in hand. His spirit was undaunted, his manner of life severe and self-denying, and he had something of that fanatic zeal and confidence in his own inspirations, which seems necessary to qualify a man to complete a great public revolution. No text was more frequently on his lips than that which was so often heard from the remorseless puritans of Cromwell's time, *Cursed be he that doeth the work of the Lord negligently.* His next successors, Urban II. and Pascal II., were men of talents and character, and seemed to be cast in the same mould; the first was the great promoter of the crusades; the other the successful assertor of the right of investiture, which, by the help of Anselm, he

gained from King Henry I. of England[1], and prepared the way for further encroachments on the English Church.

Although nothing can justify the assumption of such authority on false pretences, there is some reason to conclude that the papal power, thus founded, was politically a public benefit compared with the confusion and darkness which had gone before. To this period of its rise the words of Mr. Southey are meant to apply: "The indignation, which its corruptions ought properly to excite, must not prevent us from seeing, that, raised and supported as this power was wholly by opinion, it must originally have possessed or promised some peculiar and manifest advantages. If it had not been adapted to the then condition of Europe, it could not have existed. Though in itself an enormous abuse, it was the remedy for some great evils, the palliative of others. We have but to look at the Abyssinians and the oriental Christians, to see what Europe would have become without the papacy. With all its errors, its corruptions, and its crimes, it was, morally and intellectually, the conservative power of Christendom. Politically, too, it was the means of saving Europe; for in all human probability, the West, like the East, must have been overrun by Mahommedanism, if, in that great crisis of the world, the Roman Church had not roused the nations to an united effort, commensurate with the danger[2]."

The moral strength of the cause was still on the side of Rome in the violence and misrule of Stephen's reign, and when Henry II. attempted to revive the same misapplication and sale of Church-patronage, which Rufus and his grandfather had begun. The contest with Becket was maintained stoutly on either side; but the bloody death by which that unhappy prelate fell turned the scale against the king, by the impression

[1] See CHURTON'S *Early English Church.*

[2] *Book of the Church,* c. x.

that is always produced by self-devotion and sacrifice of life even on a mistaken principle. It now remained only for a commanding spirit on the papal side to complete the subjugation of the opposite power.

Such a spirit was found, when Innocent III., from whose accession, A.D. 1199, we have dated the highest point of the papal dominion, was forced into active hostility by the profligate and violent King John. This prince, by seizing on the property of the Church within his realm, provoked a power which he was unable to contend with, wielded as it was by a man more able and determined than had yet arisen among the successors of Hildebrand. Innocent's notion of the supremacy was even more exalted than Gregory's, though he only followed the same principles, when he affirmed that "the Church owes no reverence to any person but the Pope, who has no superior but God." He had, therefore, no scruple in pronouncing sentence of deprivation on two emperors in succession; and when John refused to allow him to appoint bishops for the English sees, he at once placed the kingdom under an interdict, excommunicated him, and gave away his crown to Philip of France.

If we wonder how the peers of England, barons as well as bishops, should have acquiesced in this humiliation of their sovereign, we must remember who that sovereign was; an usurper who had invaded the throne, and, if he is not much belied, had secured himself in it by the murder of his nephew, the rightful heir, and one whose whole reign was a series of lawless insult, treachery, and cruelty. To reduce the Church to subjection, he had seized on her estates and expelled her ministers. Those who remained in the kingdom were exempted from the protection of law; their murderers were set at liberty; and a priest who had killed a person by chance-medley having fled from the king's vindictive temper, he ordered three innocent persons to be hanged in his stead. As to the barons, if he suspected their loyalty, his way of proceeding was to deal

with them as if under martial law; he required hostages from them, seized on their wives and children, and in many instances it was proved that there was but one step for them between a prison and a grave. One instance from private life, which lies out of the common records of the chronicles, will serve to mark the horrors of that time.

On the borders of Wales, in an English or Norman fortress erected in Brecknockshire, resided a baron named William de Bruce. A writer who knew him well describes his life and character, as one who set God always before him, having a constant regard to the precept of St. James, and saying in all that he designed and undertook, "if the Lord will." He had a large correspondence with persons of distinction in different parts of England, and charged his secretaries to begin with an acknowledgment of the Divine mercy, and to end every letter with a word about the Divine aid. In travelling, he never came to a church or cross by the way-side without turning aside to it to offer a short prayer; if engaged at the time in conversation with high or low, commoner or noble, still he would leave it for this duty, and after a brief space return. "What was further remarkable," says this friend, "whenever he met children in his way, his custom was to invite them to talk with him with a few kind words on either side, that he might, as it were, force the little innocents to give him their blessing, and give them his own in return. This practice was also his wife's, Matilda de St. Valery, a good wife and mother, and mistress of his house and property. Would to God," he concludes, "that they had both met with as much temporal happiness and comfort at the close of their lives, as I trust they have, for their devout lives, obtained of eternal glory[1]!"

It is not strange that he should thus draw a veil over the dreadful sequel. King John, suspecting De Bruce's fidelity perhaps more from his religious character than

[1] Gyraldus Cambr., *Itinerary of Wales*, i. 2.

any other cause, sent to demand his eldest son to be given up for a hostage. The baron was absent from home; but his lady, noble and high-spirited, indignantly resenting the affront, replied to the messenger, "Go, tell your master, his care of his nephew has not been such, that I should consign to him any sons of mine." When De Bruce heard of this rash answer, he saw that there was no safety for them, and immediately fled with his wife and children to Ireland. There, in the following year, the poor woman, with her eldest son and a daughter-in-law, and other children and little grandchildren, fell into the tyrant's hands; the old baron himself having gone to France, where he died, and was honourably buried by Archbishop Langton. The poor prisoners were conveyed to Bristol, and thence to Windsor, where women, children, and infants were thrust into a dark dungeon, and done to death by famine[1].

> A thousand ways our mortal steps are led
> To the cold tomb, and fearful all to tread;
> But that most fearful, when with slow decay
> Pale hunger drains life's gushing fount away!

After a history like this, can any Christian reader doubt on which side the scale of justice and mercy turned in this contest? Moreover, if it be true, as it is told with strong evidence of truth by Matthew Paris, this miscreant king was guilty of an act, which, even in the present state of our laws and constitution, without aid of the Pope, would have enforced the surrender of his crown. This was his secret embassy to Mohammed Ebn Yacub, caliph of the Moors in Africa and Spain, offering to turn Mussulman and pay him tribute, if the Moorish prince would assist him against his own subjects. The answer of the Miramolin was remarkable, and characteristic of the feelings of a well-educated Mussulman: "I have lately met with a book written in

---

[1] *Annals of Margan Abbey*, A.D. 1210; *Annals of Waverley Abbey*, ibid.

the Greek language by a Greek Philosopher and Christian, named Paul; whose words and actions give me much satisfaction. There is only one thing about him which I like not, that he remained not stedfast in the law in which he was born, but, like an inconstant man and a deserter, fled from it."

When we turn from the degraded throne of England to take a view of the court of Rome at this period, the contrast is very striking. Instead of the insane and savage despot, who was making priest and peer his prey, we see a zealous, self-denying man, in the prime of life, unsparing of his time and care for the public state of Christendom, yet amidst all his labours anxiously stealing a few leisure hours for meditation on the book of Divine truth, and writing a commentary on the seven penitential psalms. His wealth was disposed of in charitable foundations, and gifts bestowed on the suffering Church in Palestine. Though of a noble family, he had no nephews or other relations whom he sought unduly to advance; but administered the affairs of his own little state with disinterested integrity, while with the greatest skill and determination he forced the kingdoms of Europe to obey his laws.

While, however, we give the praise which is his due to the man, we must not look with favour or indulgence on the principles which he thus successfully established. No sooner was the mitre exalted above the crown, than it began to show the abuses which accompany all unlicensed sway,—with this further evil, that the cruelties and extortions, which before affected only the credit of the civil government, now began to be perpetrated in the name of religion, and to bring disgrace and infamy on the office of those who sat in the apostles' seat. Innocent III. had proclaimed a crusade against King John. If Matthew Paris's story of the embassy to the Moors be true, it was as lawful as that against Saladin, at least. It is far more questionable on what grounds he afterwards awarded the same

measure to the poor sectaries called Albigenses, in Narbonne and the south of France. But when Gregory IX. excommunicated the Emperor Frederic II., a prince who had himself obliged the Pope by leading a successful crusade to the Holy Land,—when he proclaimed a crusade, and excited the states of Italy to a protracted war against him, and when for this purpose large taxes were levied on the Church of England through the weak connivance of Henry III.,—people began to ask whether this was a proper use to which to apply the endowments of English churches, and whether the Pope could thus make every prince a heretic who had given him some personal offence.

Still this evil was tolerable[1] compared with that which soon followed, when it was found that simony, which Hildebrand had spent so much pains in checking when it was transacted between churchmen and their prince, was now transferred on a much larger scale to the court of Rome. It soon became notorious that the candidate for preferment, who went best furnished with treasure, had the best chance of prosecuting a successful suit with pope and cardinals. The issue of the contest between Innocent and King John had taken not only the investiture, but the appointment and patronage of bishopries from the crown to the pope. From bishopries the claim was soon extended to abbacies, deaneries, and other preferments; and all to be paid for in meal or malt, a sum paid down, or an instalment, to be followed by more. In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries there were sometimes as many as five or six hundred clergymen from England occupied with business at Rome; some waiting for preferment, some

[1] It is well said by a late writer on this subject: "We are far from approving of the encroachments of pontiffs on the rights of contemporary monarchs: but considering what those princes commonly were in education and character, and how they exercised their prerogatives, we doubt whether it was in *this* respect that the usurpations of the Roman see were chiefly to be deprecated."—*Encycl. Metrop., History*, c. lxxvii.

to make appeals against the jurisdiction of bishops in their dioceses, others seeking new privileges for their monasteries or their religious order. The papal capital was filled with the noise of litigation; and the pontiff's court was made a kind of court of chancery to every other ecclesiastical court in Europe. Even an honest pope, amongst such innumerable temptations to be partial, must have been oppressed with the load of business, so distracting to a mind of any religious temper, and so foreign to the proper employment of a spiritual pastor of the Church of Christ. What was to be expected, when from the political situation which he held in Italy, he was compelled continually to use a variety of shifts to supply an exhausted exchequer, to negotiate peace on hard terms, or hire troops to defend him in war?

All this time, the canon-law was receiving new additions from the labours of those popes, who were most diligent in exacting these supplies. Gregory IX. and Innocent IV. were great lawyers; and the code, which they enlarged and made more perfect, was continually extending its jurisdiction, so that it becomes difficult to say what causes might not be brought within its circuit. For since all crimes are spiritual offences as well as transgressions of the law of the land, there would be a constant question to which of the two tribunals they should be brought. And, in fact, throughout this period the common law courts and the spiritual were continually at variance. There can be no doubt that the Church, as a religious society, has an inherent right of self-government; and even when the law of the land is founded on the revealed word of God, as it must be in every Christian country, there are cases in which the spiritual judge ought to exercise a different jurisdiction from that of the state. The loss of all penitential discipline in the Church is an evil which we deplore[1]; and it is to be feared it is one of

[1] See the Commination Service, in the Prayer-book.

those things which has brought the common people to think nothing a sin which the law of the land does not punish. But this discipline was not destroyed at the Reformation, when many efforts were made to restore it; but by the conduct of the ecclesiastical courts long before. The system, which came from Rome in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, was one which, instead of reviving discipline, overlooked the grossest offences, and multiplied positive laws, for the purpose of exacting fines when these laws were dispensed with. What other judgment can we form of those prohibitions of marriage between the most remote cousins, for violating which nothing was required but a sufficient sum paid for a dispensation to the court of Rome? Or if this law was at first put forth by sincere mistaken men, what sense of morality can justify those who afterwards took money for the violation of it? If the law was bad, why not rescind it? If it was just and right, it was treason to the law of God to permit it to be broken. Wills, contracts, and bonds, and all matters in which oaths were to be administered, were easily drawn within the jurisdiction of the spiritual courts. It would have been well if this had not been made the means of dispensing with the obligation of oaths after they had been taken. But of all pretences by which persons were made responsible to the laws of the Church, none was more multiplied than that of sacrilege. If an officer of the king took a thief out of a sanctuary, he must be excommunicated till he had paid his fine. If a mischievous knave docked the tail of a bishop's palfrey, or if a stout baron played the practical jest of waylaying the abbot's venison, and prevented him for one day from keeping the custom of "Bolton Abbey in the Olden Time," it was no less than the sin of sacrilege. Such harshness only provoked the offences it was intended to check; and the annals of monasteries are full of complaints against their country neighbours, who drained their fish-ponds, broke their park-fences, and carried off their deer.

The spirit of the time is sufficiently marked by the form of general excommunication, which, during a good portion of this period, was pronounced four times a year against the enemies of the Church's authority and privileges. The foremost of the offenders enumerated as under a curse are "those that purchasen writs or letters of any lewd court[1], to let[2] the process of the law of holy Chirche of causes that longen skilfully[3] to Christen court, the which shuld not be demed[4] by none other law." The next were those that should alienate any of the Church-lands. And thirdly, those who should withhold or diminish from the Church's portion in tithes and offerings. No doubt these two last were injurious and dishonest practices; but why they should be selected alone out of all the sins against the decalogue, it would puzzle a man to say, unless it was, as Wycliffe said, that churchmen were more anxious to secure their own temporalities, than to maintain the honour of God's laws. And as to the first, it only proves the outrageous zeal they had to secure those exemptions, which it had cost so much to obtain, and which were so ruinous in their consequences.

These criminals, however, and these only, were on such occasions pronounced accursed[5]. The prelate or priest, coming into the church, mounted his pulpit, and with bell, book, and candles burning, and the form of the merciful Redeemer sculptured on a crucifix lifted up before him, thundered out the words in the plain old English of the time; for though the prayers were in Latin, the curses were in the vulgar tongue: "By authority of God, Fader, Son, and Holy Ghost; and the glorious moder and maiden, our ladie St. Marie, and the blessed apostles, Peter and Paul, and all apostles,

---

[1] lay court; court of common law. [2] hinder, or stay.
[3] belong separately. [4] doomed, judged.
[5] It is scarcely necessary to allude to the contrast presented in our own Church-service for Ash-Wednesday, speaking the solemn sentence of God's law in the words of God. This service is, indeed, in its original far more ancient.

martyrs, confessors, virgins, and the hallows (saints) of God; we denounce all those accursyd, that byn so found guiltie, and all those that maintainen them in ther sins, or given them thereto help or counsell. For they be departid fro God and holy Chirche, and they have no part of the passyon of our Lord Ihesu Crist, ne of noe sacraments, ne noe part of the prayers among Christen folk: but they byn accursyd fro the sole of ther foot to the crown of ther head, slepyng and wakyng, sittyng and standyng, and in all ther wordes and in all ther workes, but if (except) they have grace of God to amend them here in this life, for to dwell in the pain of hell for ever withouten end." Then he shut the book with violence; the candles were quenched, and the bells rung; while the congregation, receiving the sentence as if it had been ratified above, raised a cry of terror for the fate of the persons involved in such a doom.

When one reads of such dreadful words, and sometimes worse than these, pronounced over trivial offences, applied in vengeance for private quarrels, and often for acts which only the canon-law had perverted into crimes,—and when one thinks of the blessings with which the Gospel was ushered in, and the brotherly love and tender pity which it is its office to shed abroad,—the eye fills with tears at the record of such debasing cruelty and superstition. And yet, for raising his voice against these practices, was Wycliffe threatened with imprisonment and bonds.

The amount of influence thus exercised upon the country will be more easily judged of by considering the numbers of the clergy in proportion to the population, and the amount of their property as compared with that of the laity. But in both these respects we are left without any certain ground on which to form a calculation. The statements usually made that the Conqueror found a third of the land of England in the hands of the Church[1], and that in the time of King

[1] Sir Wm. Temple, *Works*, folio, ii. 560. Hallam, *Middle Ages*, ii. 209.

John this amount had nearly reached one-half, seem in each case to exceed probability. As far as can be judged from the Doomsday survey, the amount of Church property at the Conquest would be more nearly one-tenth than one-third, and if this amount were doubled during the two following centuries, when more than five hundred monastic establishments were founded, it has been thought that this would leave a sufficiently large proportion [1]. One-fifth of the whole country, and that the best cultivated part, was a vast amount, when it is considered that the proportion which the Church property now bears to other landed property, is somewhere about a fiftieth. But in this calculation it is to be remembered that the religious houses were accustomed to lease out a great part of their lands to laymen, for easy fines, as Bishops and Deans and Chapters still do [2]. So that they were not perhaps the direct landlords of more than one-half that amount [3].

And precisely the same uncertainty exists as to the

---

[1] H. Warton: Harmer's *Remarks on Burnet*, p. 41.

[2] Harmer, l. c.

[3] But it must be admitted that as far as any records extend from which a judgment might be formed, they will give a much larger proportion. It is stated by Selden, (*Titles of Honour*, p. 572-3,) from Ordericus Vitalis, who lived in the time of Stephen, that the Conqueror distributed the whole country into about 60,000 portions, called Knights' Fees, and the same writer as well as Stow, (*Annals*, p. 285,) gives the actual number of Knights' Fees in the time of King John, as 62,215, of which the proportion held by the Church was then reckoned at 28,000, or near one-half. Selden however elsewhere denies that a Knight's Fee was a measured quantity, as is commonly supposed, so that if the lands of the religious were taxed with a greater service than others, this may account for the statement. Besides, if this be a contemporary statement, it does not follow that those who made it were correct. They seem to have reckoned 45,000 parish churches, and 52,080 townships in England[a], and this can hardly be accurate. The present number of parishes is about 15,000. It should be added that in Wycliffe's answer for the Parliament against paying tribute to the Pope, he gives the speech of a Lord who says, "A third part, or

---

[a] Selden, *ubi supra*.

numbers of the clergy. In the absence of all certain information, the following may be offered as a probable conjecture. The number of chantries suppressed by 1 Edward VI., including all chaplaincies to hospitals and colleges, was 2374; of which we may suppose one priest for each, though this would exceed the actual amount. The whole number of lesser monasteries, dissolved 27 Henry VIII., was 376. If we suppose an average of six inmates for each house, this will give us 2256, a more probable number than 10,000, as stated by Stow. The greater monasteries were 186, and their average income about 600*l*. Calculating their numbers by the same proportion to their income, as in the case of the smaller houses, this will give the average number of inmates at thirty-six, in all 6696. The number of "religious persons," therefore, at the time of the Reformation, from which time the data for these calculations are taken, will be 8952, besides the priests of the chauntries 2374, in all 11,326. Of these a considerable proportion were not in holy orders, for there were always lay-brothers in the monasteries, besides that the nuns are included in this calculation[1]. But in forming an estimate of the actual number who, under whatever designation, belonged to the order of the clergy, we must still add to this amount the whole number of parish priests, except those who served cures belonging to the monasteries, and a vast number of inferior persons employed in menial offices in the convents, all of whom had some lesser orders, as well as those who devoted

---

more, of the land of this kingdom is held in mortmain by the Church."—(Le Bas, p. 126.) Hence it is clear that in Edward III.'s time the proportion was *reckoned* at about a third; as in the time of John it has been at still more. Most probably these calculations were only made upon the cultivated lands, and a third of these at that time would be perhaps a fifth of the whole.

[1] The writer is indebted for much assistance in this calculation of the number of religious persons, as for many other suggestions and contributions, to his friend, the Rev. Edward Churton, now archdeacon of Cleveland.

themselves to the legal profession, and in some instances also to medical science[1].

It may be affirmed that the population during these ages could not exceed 4,000,000, and if we suppose one-third of the inmates of the monasteries to have been priests, stating them at 3000, these with the chantry priests will make 5374, in addition to the whole number of parish priests, say altogether 15,000, which will be the same number of working clergy for a population of 4,000,000, that we have now in England when the population is 15,000,000, taking no account of the number of "religious" who had no cure of souls. There were at least as many parishes as now, each with its own priest, besides that many Churches had one or more Mass Priests attached to chantries, who were often required to assist the parish Priest in his duties. Then again there was hardly a neighbourhood in which there were not one or more monasteries, who were the proprietors of many of the village churches, receiving the tithes, and performing the duties by means of a vicar or substitute, answering to what we now improperly understand by a curate. There were six hundred and sixty religious houses, at least, at the time they were suppressed: but the names are preserved, in the whole, of eighteen hundred places at which some sort of religious foundation had at some time existed[2].

---

[1] This may account in some degree for the great discrepancy between different calculations of the numbers of these persons. A recent publication (FULLARTON'S *Parliamentary Gazetteer*), which gives the population of England in A.D. 1377, at no more than 2,300,000, reckons the total number of the religious at the same time at 47,721.

[2] An attempt has been made to calculate the revenues of the Church in the year 1337, from the fact that two cardinals who came to England that year, received 50 marks a day for their expenses, being four pennies out of every mark from every church. MACPHERSON *on Commerce*, vol. i., 519 (as quoted by Hallam) who cites Knighton (col. 2750), and infers that the Church revenue was therefore 2000 marks a day, and 730,000 marks a year,

The popedom was not without its reverses and disasters after it had attained its zenith. The long reigns of Henry III. in England, and Louis IX., commonly called St. Louis, in France, and the character of both these kings, had greatly favoured its advance. But when Edward I. and Philip the Fair were seated on these respective thrones, it would have required a pope of great prudence and circumspection to maintain his influence with them. Such was not Boniface VIII., a man of overweening self-confidence, and of very questionable character. He is said to have gained the papacy by a shallow trick, but one that sufficed for a weak superstitious old man, his predecessor Celestin V. As he was reposing himself at night in his chamber, Boniface contrived by a tube to send a voice into his ear, by which he was warned to resign his office. He believed it to be a celestial message, and complied; but afterwards finding how he had been deceived, he said to his successor, on his election: "You have stolen into the chair like a fox; your temper will rule in it like a lion; but you will die like a dog." The words were verified in the fortunes of Boniface. He began his rule over the Church of England by sending orders to Archbishop Winchelsey, that the clergy should pay no taxes to the king without his concurrence. For acting in compliance with this order, the archbishop brought

---

which he observes was more than twelve times the national revenue in the reign of Henry III.,—the revenue of Edward III., to whose time this record belongs, not being known. But as regards this last statement, the crown revenue in those days was merely the king's private income from his own estates; the national revenue, if it existed at all, was in occasional subsidies, and in feudal service. An old Durham MS. which appears to have been written about A.D. 1406, gives the amount of the clergy's tenth in one year at 18,876*l.*, when the lay fifteenth was 37,933*l.* This would make the proportion of the Church-lands rather less than one-fourth; or if we suppose the 18,876*l.* to include the tenth of tithes, rather less than one-fifth. And this is according to the estimate of one of the best ecclesiastical antiquaries.—See H. WARTON, *on Burnet*, as above.

upon himself and the Church the fierce wrath of a stern prince, who soon made him to understand the duty of a subject. This, and opposing Edward's ambitious designs on Scotland, destroyed this Pope's power in England. The French king brought the contest to much closer quarters: he sent an armed force into Italy; and proclaiming charges of heresy, simony, and other crimes, brought by the French clergy against Boniface, and joined by two cardinals of the powerful family of Colonna, whom he had made his enemies, they surprised him in his country-residence at Anagnia, made him prisoner, spoiled him of enormous treasures, and left him so destitute and heart-broken, that he died a short time after, A.D. 1304.

This event broke the charm of the papal power in its contest with kings; but over the Church it was still undisputed. And now what the Popes could not do by authority, they began by baser means to effect by intrigue. Clement V., to keep up his credit with Edward I., gave him absolution from fulfilling his coronation-oath. This Pope, in A.D. 1309, removed his court to Avignon in France; where his successors for nearly seventy years continued to reside, and where the old palace with its dungeons still remains a monument of tyranny gone by. Here they continued their exactions, and wasted in profligate luxury the goods which a better age had lavished in piety and alms. With the English court these Popes of Avignon were deservedly unpopular; they were governed by French influence, and often thwarted, as far as they could, the designs of England against France. Hence Edward III., by some wise laws, as his grandfather had done, checked their appointment of bishops, and cut short their supplies. But while the king's consent was necessary, the Pope still provided, as he called it; and it was not likely that an English clergyman would be promoted who was in bad esteem at the papal court. There were many attractions for ambitious churchmen in the patronage of the Pontiff abroad; and more than one

*

English archbishop resigned his mitre for a cardinal's hat; while friars found lucrative employment as judges and advocates at Avignon and Rome.

There was still one step wanting to complete the disorders of the Church, and to destroy the last ties of Christian brotherhood. It had followed in other countries almost immediately after the papal triumph; but in England, though there was manifold corruption and debasing superstition in all quarters, there was as yet no avowed *persecution*. The papal lawyers had long aimed to introduce a law into all the states of Christendom, that persons convicted of heresy by the ecclesiastical judge should be capitally punished by the civil power. They had succeeded, in 1224, in Germany, where the Emperor Frederic II. had enacted such a law, and another with it, that all temporal lords, who protected heretics after warning from the Church, should forfeit their estates; a law which, by a judicial retribution, the Pope afterwards turned against Frederic himself, when he declared this prince a heretic, and drove him from the Kingdom of Sicily, which he gave to Charles of Anjou. They had attempted it in France; but St. Louis, to his great honour, was not seduced by his pious zeal into compliance. His answer was, that no man should suffer by his sentence, who had not been tried by his laws. Yet it was in his time that Gregory IX., A.D. 1233, erected the courts of the Inquisition on the frontiers of his kingdom at Thoulouse; and it would seem that this devout king had greatly aided the fanatic warfare by which Count Raymond was assailed. In the following reigns no country was more disgraced by cruel executions for heresy than France.

In England the progress of this cruelty was more slow. The fierce ignorance of the people had indeed been shown in many dreadful persecutions of the Jews; and in the reign of Henry II. a party of thirty foreign sectaries are said to have perished miserably, wandering about the country, where no man would give them food

or shelter. But as yet, down to Wycliffe's time, there was no statute awarding the extreme penalty of the law. And it is singular enough that the way by which persecution was gradually introduced into England, was by means of the privileges of the clerical order, better known as the benefit of clergy. By this privilege, which was contested between Henry II. and Becket, and confirmed by King John's charter, no clerical person was liable to be tried in the king's courts, and any person, who had been so tried, was at liberty to bring proof of what was called "his clergy," on which he was delivered to the ecclesiastical judge and a new trial took place. He was admitted to take his oath that he was innocent, before a jury of twelve clerks, and to produce twelve compurgators who swore they believed he spoke the truth: witnesses were examined on behalf of the prisoner only, and the result often was the acquittal of those who had been condemned in the king's courts[1]. It was in consequence of the powers thus exercised that the bishops, from the time of the Savoyard Boniface, archbishop of Canterbury, A.D. 1244—1270, began to have prisons in their several dioceses, which prisons, in the time of the Lollards, became places of cruel confinement.

Gregory XI. left his court, which he had brought back to Rome, in a state of miserable dissension. The Roman people assembled in large masses, and forced the cardinals, most of whom were Frenchmen, to elect an Italian to the vacant chair. They chose Urban VI., —a man of harsh temper and manners, severe to himself, as Walsingham describes him, but more severe to others, and one who never forgave an offence. The French cardinals soon after separated themselves from

[1] BLACKSTONE, iv. 367. The terms "clerk," and "scholar," became synonymous, and any man who could read was admitted to claim his clergy. But it was enacted, 18 Eliz. c. 7, that no man allowed his clergy should be committed to his ordinary—that is, he should be tried in the queen's court.

him, annulled their election, and chose another pope of their own body, with the name of Clement VII. Urban immediately declared their cardinalships forfeited, and appointed a new set of cardinals. War ensued. Clement's party were defeated in a pitched battle, with the loss of five thousand men; and he escaped to Avignon, where he was supported by France, Spain, and Scotland; while Germany, England, and Italy adhered to Urban, who suspecting even the cardinals who remained with him, soon after put six of them to the torture, and among them Adam Easton, a learned Englishman. He then ordered the rest to be thrown into the sea in sacks, but spared the life of Easton, out of regard to the English nation.

When Wycliffe heard of this double election, he felt as a persecuted man might feel, when the tyranny that had almost crushed him was, to all human appearance, tottering to its fall. He immediately put forth his spirited tract, entitled, *The Schism of the Popes*. "Stand we firm," he said, "in the faith that Christ's law teacheth, —for never was there greater need,—and trust we to the help of Christ. For he hath begun to help us graciously, in that he hath *cloven the head of Antichrist*, and made the one part to fight against the other. No doubt the sin of the Popes, which has been so long continued, has brought on this division. If both these heads last, or the one by itself, then shall the last error be worse than the first." He therefore called upon emperor and king to put down the temporal sovereignty of the Pope, and take away the territory of the see in Italy: for this not only he, but almost every wise and thoughtful man in Christendom at this time, looked upon as the source of the evil[1]. "Maintain God's law, conquer your own

[1] Dante, as translated by Milton, had said long before:

"O Constantine, of how much ill was cause—
Not thy conversion—but those rich domains
Which the first wealthy Pope received of thee!"

It was believed in the middle ages that the Emperor Constantine had given the Bishop of Rome his territory in Italy; though there

heritage, and destroy this foul sin, saving the persons. And then were peace found for us, and simony destroyed. Let lords, who love God's law, help their princes in this cause. For to them it belongs; and more glorious conquest did never Christian king."

If this reformation which he proposed was root and branch, we cannot wonder at it, when we reflect on the state of things which pressed upon his mind. It is seldom that persecution leads the oppressed to regard the oppressors with more favour than is here intimated, in the wish to spare their persons, but to take away their means of doing harm. But before we pass judgment on Wycliffe, we must take a closer view of religious society in England at the time when he appeared.

---

was no truth in it, and no proof that there was any lordship belonging to the see before the age of Charlemagne. It was also a story at this time often repeated by Wycliffe, John of Trevisa, and other English writers, from the works of the Abbot Joachim, that when the gift was made, an angel's voice was heard, saying, "Alas! this day is venom poured forth into the Church!"

CHAPTER IV.

TRANSUBSTANTIATION. PENANCE. CONFESSION.

O come to our Communion Feast;
There present in the heart,
Not in the hands, th' Eternal Priest
Will his true self impart.—*Christian Year.*

TO the same period which we have now been considering must be referred the establishment of some points of *doctrine*, which have an equally important bearing on the history of the Reformation. No doubt the first advocates of the transubstantiation were led by a sincere though mistaken zeal, meaning to maintain the consolatory and scriptural truth, that "the body and blood of Christ are verily and indeed taken and received by the Faithful in the Lord's Supper." But it is a temptation incident to human nature to bring down everything to the level of human reason. And so, rather than acknowledge that there are mysteries which they could not fathom, men tried to explain the way in which Christ is actually present, according to his promise, by affirming that his natural body and blood are contained in the consecrated bread and wine, and that they cease to be bread and wine, and only seem to be so.

Nothing is more certain that this was not the teaching of the Anglo-Saxon Church. It is said to have been first promulgated about A.D. 820 by Paschasius Radbertus, a monk of Corbey, in the diocese of Amiens, who was forced, by the excitement which ensued, to resign the abbacy of his house. He was answered by Bertram, or Rattram, whose book is dedicated to Charlemagne, and professes to be written by his command[1].

---

[1] This book was first printed in English A.D. 1548. It is entitled *The Boke of Bartram priest, intreating of the bodye and blode of Chryste, written to greate Charles emperoure, and set forth viii c yeres agoo.*

He asserts "that the body and blood of Christ, which in the Church are received by the mouth of the believers, are figures, according to their outward show and visible form, but that according to an invisible substance, that is, according to the power of that divine Word, they are verily and indeed the body and blood of Christ." And as for the change in the elements, he says, "If they will say, that it is made in respect of the substance of the creatures, I answer that that cannot be so; for in respect of the substance of the creatures, look whatsoever they were before consecration, they are even the same afterwards. But they were bread and wine before, and, therefore, they remain the same[1]." It was this book which first convinced our own Ridley, and after him Cranmer, by showing them that the then received doctrine was not the original faith. A little later Ælfric, abbot of Malmsbury, A.D. 970, translated into Saxon a homily for Easter from the Latin, nearly copied from Bertram's book[2].

The new doctrine was brought into England by Lanfranc of Pavia, made Archbishop of Canterbury by the Conqueror. His learned adversary Berenger, better known as Berengarius, who was Archdeacon of Angers, in France, wanted the moral courage necessary to a successful defence of the truth. And there was a defect in his teaching, which exposed his opinions to some just exceptions. He is thought to have been a follower of Scotus Erigena, who is said to have denied that there is, in this sacrament, anything more than a bare sign, and no actual presence of Christ. Such an opinion was justly condemned by several councils before which he was summoned, and where he retracted it: but there is some doubt whether he had said so, for when he wrote again afterwards he taught that there is a real spiritual presence of Christ in the holy communion. He com-

---

[1] It is important to show this, because some modern Romanists have asserted that Bertram did not absolutely deny their doctrine of transubstantiation.

[2] See the opinions of Ælfric in CHURTON'S *Early English Church*, p. 253. See also PALMER'S *Church History*, p. 127.

pared his own weakness to St. Peter's denial, and complained as if threats and terror had been used against him. But in his own solemn and melancholy words, in another place, "the words of a priest must be either the words of truth, or sacrilege." It is a lesson for all times against a wavering soul, to think what may be lost by the sinful compliance of one trying hour. After several recantations he was finally summoned before Pope Hildebrand at a council at Rome, A.D. 1079, where he was made to submit to the doctrine as propounded by the council. Yet even the words of this formal recantation, commonly called "the decree *Ego Berengarius*," though they most strongly assert the actual and substantial change of the bread and wine into the true body and blood of Christ, were cited by Wycliffe[1] in proof that the Church of Rome had not even then arrived at the point of transubstantiation. It is confessed that the *name* was then a novelty, and it shows how divided men's mind were, on the subject in the time of Berenger, that he was made archdeacon by the Bishop of Angers, and wrote, for some time, under his sanction.

It is, indeed, matter of some doubt whether this doctrine of transubstantiation was absolutely established in the Church of Rome before the Council of Trent. But it was generally received from the time of the fourth Lateran Council, held under Innocent III. A.D. 1215, a short time after his successful contest with King John. It was usual for the Acts of every council to open with a confession of faith, but, on this occasion, the following words were introduced, under the head of belief in the Universal Church. "In which (Church) Jesus Christ himself is at once both Priest and Sacrifice, whose body and blood are truly contained in the sacrament of the altar under the appearance of bread and wine, the bread being transubstantiated into the body and the wine into the blood by divine power"—a decree to be deplored by all succeeding ages for the divisions, strifes, and

[1] *Dialogues*, Pt. iv. ch. ii. p. 102.

sufferings which it has brought into the Christian church. For, although it was still a question whether this was sufficient to make it a matter of faith, since the Pope merely propounded this confession on his own authority, without submitting it to the deliberation of the council, it was soon after adopted by diocesan and provincial synods in most parts of Christendom, and was deemed to be the doctrine of the Church. The earliest notice of it, in any canons of the English Church, is at a diocesan synod at Salisbury, A.D. 1217, two years after this Lateran Council, where it was expressed in the same words; but we shall find that it had not been formally adopted by the English Convocation until the time of Wycliffe.

It was a natural consequence of this belief that divine honours should be paid to the consecrated elements, and it was accordingly ordained, by Honorius III., the successor of Innocent, that adoration should be made at the elevation of the host. But it was not long before it was confirmed by a special festival, in honour, as it is said, of this great gift of God to his Church. This festival, called *Corpus Domini*, began to be celebrated in Flanders a little before the Lateran Council, in consequence of some visions of a nun at Liege[1], and was appointed by the Bishop of Liege, about A.D. 1246, but was not confirmed by the Church of Rome until A.D. 1264, when Urban IV., being unwilling to sanction it, was induced to do so by the alleged miracle of Bolsena. The Pope was staying at Orvieto, a neighbouring city, when a priest, who had entertained doubts about this doctrine, is said to have seen the miracle performed as he was consecrating the sacred elements[2].

---

[1] LIGUORI, *Oper. Dogmat.*, p. 324. LAMBERTINI *de Festis*, art. *Corpus Domini*. The present Office was composed by Thomas Aquinas.

[2] Even so there seems some contradiction. The vision is said to have been seen *in formâ pietatis*, in the form of a *Pietà* or dead Christ, whereas the present doctrine is that the elements are changed into Christ's living body.

The miraculous host was borne to Orvieto in grand procession, and the Pope no longer hesitated to appoint the festival for the whole Church. This is by no means a single instance of the way in which those in authority may be driven forward, beyond their own wishes or intentions, by the intemperance of inferior persons in carrying out opinions to which they are committed. The *exposition* of the host upon the altar for divine worship is first heard of about A.D. 1248, and in the following century the *procession* of the holy sacrament received the papal sanction[1].

The practice of communion in both kinds was not discontinued till the twelfth century, and this innovation also was gradually introduced. It had become usual in most parts of Western Christendom to dip the bread in the cup, and thus administer it in a spoon. This was forbidden by the Council of Claremont, A.D. 1095, which ordered that no one should communicate of the altar without taking the body separately and the blood in like manner[2]. But instead of inducing a return to the primitive usage, this led to withholding the cup altogether from the laity. In the thirteenth century there is evidence that it was generally discontinued, and the Council of Constance, in the fifteenth, expressly forbad it. Still a power was reserved to the Pope, of allowing it in certain cases, and the Council of Trent at one time had thoughts of restoring it.

Equally great was the departure from ancient usage which was introduced in these ages regarding the frequency of the Holy Communion. Indeed the change of the Communion into what is now understood by the Mass, is one of the most remarkable in the history of

---

[1] LIGUORI, *ubi supra*. Lambertini thinks the procession was observed from the time that Urban went in procession to conduct the miraculous host into the town of Orvieto. The magnificent Cathedral of Orvieto, one of the most beautiful specimens of Italian mediæval architecture, was erected in honour of this miracle.

[2] Concil. Clare. A.D. 1095. LABBE, tom. x. p. 508, Can. xxviii.

the Church. In the first three centuries there is evidence that the priest gave the Communion to all who had been present at the celebration. St. Cyprian says[1], "We receive the eucharist every day, as the food of our salvation, unless for some grave offence we are obliged to refrain from it." And Justin Martyr, in his *Apology*, says the same. The Apostolical Canons, framed, as we have seen in the third, or the beginning of the fourth century, ordained that "those who should come to church and not communicate should be excommunicated." Here is some indication of the commencement of a departure from the primitive custom. Two centuries later, the Council of Agda ordained, A.D. 506, that every one should communicate three times in the year, at the Nativity, Easter, and Pentecost. But there is evidence from a writer who lived near that time, that in the Greek church both clergy and laity communicated every Sunday, and those who did not were excommunicated; and he says the Roman practice was the same, but without excommunication. Meanwhile, as the priest continued to celebrate the divine mysteries every day, whether any communicated or not, the people gradually forgot the purpose for which they were instituted, and came to regard the *Sacrifice of the Mass* as a repetition of the very same sacrifice which the Scripture teaches us was offered once for all upon the cross. For some ages the Church continued to require attendance at the Communion, as the Church of England now does, three times in the year at the least. But the fourth Lateran Council made in this respect also a most material alteration. It was required that[2] "every adult of either sex should confess, alone, to his own priest, at least once in the year, and reverently receive the eucharist, at least at Easter." This canon, like the rest on such subjects, was intended to restore

---

[1] *De Orat. Domini.*

[2] LABBE, tom. xi. p. 172. This is the famous Canon, *Omnis utriusque sexus.*

discipline, not relax it, but it shows that the notion of daily or weekly communion was already abolished. The English bishops, indeed, were slow to carry out this provision of the Lateran Council in its full extent. For by the canons of Walter de Cantilupe, bishop of Winchester, A.D. 1240, it is enjoined that all shall confess *at least* once a year, but they are exhorted to communicate thrice[1], as is now enjoined by the Church of England. And the canons of Poor, bishop of Sarum, A.D. 1217, are to the same effect[2].

Much more important, however, were the results of this same canon, as regards the other practice to which it refers. To enjoin the attendance at the Holy Communion was a good thing, however lax the injunction might be. But the result of requiring communion once a-year, *preceded by confession*, was to render the confessional imperative on every one of the people, and it is impossible to estimate too highly the consequences of this step. These consequences have been twofold, first to impose an intolerable yoke upon the people; and secondly, to overthrow all discipline by the reaction it has caused. The intention of Innocent was probably to revive what had been neglected; for the practice of confession had existed in the East before the end of the fourth century, but was then discontinued on account of some public disorders arising from it. In western Europe it had been continued without intermission, but as a practice rather than a law, and it does not seem to have been compulsory. One of the clergy at the cathedral churches was called a canon penitentiary, whose office it was, in difficult cases, to advise the doubting conscience and to direct persons in works of repentance and acts of penance. Such confession as this, left to the option of the parties, many good men in later times have wished to see revived. Dean Colet told Erasmus that he much approved of secret confession, "professing that he never had so much comfort

[1] LABBE, tom. xi. pt. 1. p. 578. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 254.

in anything as in that." The martyr Ridley, a short time before his death, writing from his prison, used these words concerning it: "Confession to the minister, which is able to instruct, correct, comfort, and confirm the weak, wounded, and ignorant conscience, I ever thought might do much good in Christ's congregation; and so, I assure you, I think at this day." The excellent Jeremy Taylor has left on record an equally favourable opinion of this part of penitential discipline. And few considerate persons will judge differently of it. It is surely to be regretted that it is so little practical, except on a sick bed, between priest and people, in our time.

There is a remarkable testimony to the change effected by this new law of Innocent III. respecting the practice of confession, in the extant records of the Waldensian churches; a testimony not affected by any question as to the origin or antiquity of those churches themselves. In a MS. in the Vaudois language, allowed to be of the fourteenth century, and consequently 150 years before the Reformation, and less than that time after the Lateran Council, under the head of the Seven Sacraments, are these words concerning penance: "Of which penance we hold for faith, and sincerely at heart confess that it is useful to man, by reason of doing away sin. To which people should be continually admonished, and we admonish that sins be confessed according to the form of the primitive Church, and that men seek counsel in their needs of priests, who are wise and who know them. The form and obligation newly introduced by Innocent III., which the simoniac priests commonly use, ought to be declined and avoided by the faithful. The remedies useful to be duly counselled to the penitent, such as are fasting, prayers, alms, and other works of satisfaction, we confess that they are useful and profitable. Auricular confession made only to the priest alone, and the form and usance of absolution, and the enunciation of the penance in number, and foot, and measure, at the will

of the confessor, according to the mode which the simoniac priests adopt, and the obligation of Innocent III., is not of the substance, but (rather opposed to) true penance[1]." Hence we discover two facts: first, we find that a certain kind of confession, much resembling that now prescribed in the Communion Service of the Church of England, existed before this Lateran Council; and secondly, we have an almost contemporary testimony as to the mistrust and dislike with which the novelty of auricular confession, with its accompanying penances, was at first received. It matters not to brand these Vaudois as heretics. Their testimony to the matter of fact is independent of their opinions, and it goes to shew that these innovations of the Lateran Council were so considered at the time they were introduced.

The advice to confess to priests *who knew them*, has reference to a further innovation, which was introduced by Gregory IX., when he gave authority first to the Dominican Friars in A.D. 1227, to hear confessions[2], which was soon extended to other mendicant orders; "an unheard-of privilege," as Matthew Paris calls it. This was a violation of the law of the Lateran Council, which required that the people should confess to their own priests, and we shall soon have occasion to observe that it was a fruitful source of mischief, and an endless subject of complaint.

The doctrine of purgatory was not declared an article of faith till the Council of Florence, A.D. 1438, nor has it ever been determined to be material fire. This is not the place to enter upon the lengthened discussions as to the state of separate souls, which ended in the establishment of this belief. But it is to be observed that the passages from the Fathers usually alleged in its support, relate only to prayer for the dead, except two

---

[1] For further particulars of the very valuable MSS. of the Vaudois in the public library at Geneva, see Appendix A.

[2] LABBE, xi. p. 335.

places of St. Augustine, which disprove rather than countenance the modern notion[1]. But the belief in purgatory is so intimately connected with the doctrine of indulgences that the one can hardly be separated from the other. It is admitted that the name of indulgences is not found in the writings of the Fathers[2]; and it is plain that they arose out of the practice of imposing penance, which the bishop, in certain cases, had the power to remit. Those who had sacrificed to idols to save their lives were excluded from full communion, by the ancient canons, for five years, being wholly separated from the faithful for three years, and then admitted only to "communion without oblation" for two years more; that is, they were allowed to be present, but not to communicate themselves. But the Council of Ancyra, held A.D. 314, before the first Nicene Council, allowed to the bishops a power, "either of using clemency or of adding more time." They are, therefore, to "consider the foregoing and subsequent life (of the penitent), and so extend their clemency[3]." And by the Nicene Council a similar permission was expressed in these words: "For such (viz., the truly penitent) the bishop shall be allowed to devise more gentle measures." On the occasion of the first Crusade, we find indulgences granted by the Council of Claremont, A.D. 1096, under Urban II., to those who should go to the Holy War; and it is worth while to compare the style of this first indulgence for such a purpose with that which was granted a century later for a similar object by the Lateran Council. "Whosoever for devotion alone, and not for the sake of honour or wealth, shall go to Jerusalem for the liberation of the Church of God, that journey shall be reckoned to him in the place of all penance." But the words of Innocent, at the Lateran Council, are

---

[1] *De Civitat. Dei*, l. xxi., c. 6. *Enchiridion*, c. 68, on 1 Cor. xii. 13.

[2] LIGUORI, *Opera Dogmat.*, p. 501.

[3] HARDUIN *Con.*, tom. i. p. 237. LABBE, i., 1458.

as follows: "We, therefore, out of that power of binding and loosing which God has bestowed upon us, however unworthy, indulge to all who shall go in person, being contrite and confessed, the plenary forgiveness of all their sins; and we promise them an augmentation of eternal salvation in the retribution of the just."

Here we have the germ of that wonderful assumption which found its completion in the following declaration of Clement VI., A.D. 1342, in his bull *Unigenitus*; that "in the Church there is the infinite treasure of the satisfactions of Jesus Christ, and there are also the superabundant satisfactions of the blessed Virgin, who, being exempt from every actual sin, had no satisfaction to pay for herself; and the satisfactions of the saints, who, in the holy deeds of their lives, have paid more satisfaction than their sins deserved." Thus did the simple remission of penitential discipline become mixed up with a notion that penance continues beyond this present life, which led to the invention of this infinite store of merits dispensed by the rulers of the Church.

The next step, in the downward progress, was the *sale* of such indulgences; the scandalous traffic in which is almost too notorious to require description here. But we shall have occasion to mention it when we come to speak of the great dealers in this article, the Mendicant Friars.

CHAPTER V.

EFFECTS OF THE PAPAL SUPREMACY IN ENGLAND ON CLERGY AND PEOPLE. TREATMENT OF THE JEWS. GOOD BISHOPS.

> If Rome be earthly, why should any knee
> With bending adoration worship her?
> She's vicious, and your partial selves confess
> Aspires the height of all impiety.
>
> BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER.

O judge of the state of religious society in England during the time of the Papal supremacy, it will be necessary to take a view of the different classes of which it was composed, the bishops and clergy, the monastic orders, the friars, and the people. All these classes had existed before the rise of the Papal power, except the friars, whose case will require a separate consideration. Of the rest, the question will be whether they were ultimately benefited or not by the system of Church government then established. And whatever may be thought of the influence of the Papal Court upon the religion of these times, it is consoling to find how many good men there were in the Church of England.

The first English bishop appointed by the authority of the Pope was Stephen Langton, made Archbishop of Canterbury by Innocent III. A.D. 1207; a man unquestionably of high character, equal to the first of his time in sacred learning, and one who showed a high-minded consciousness in his public conduct; obeying orders from Rome, as long as they seemed bound upon him by his religious duty, but refusing to do so when they were injurious to the liberties of his country. Nor

[1] See SOUTHEY'S *Book of the Church*, cix. near the end.

can it be denied that for a time afterwards some regard was shown at Rome to the character and qualifications of the bishops to be invested, when in A.D. 1234, Gregory IX. made choice of Edmund Rich, commonly called St. Edmund, a Berkshire clergyman of blameless life and conversation, and a diligent preacher of God's word; whom however he forced upon the monks of Canterbury, after having set aside three other elections. And our respect to both these prelates is due rather for what they did in opposition to the popes who appointed them, than for any act in which they complied with their commands: to Langton, for his adherence to the barons, who stood against an excommunication from Rome in their contest for the Great Charter; to Edmund, for his resistance to the rapacity of the legate, Otho, in tithing and tolling the English Church. It is well known that this good man, after many unavailing attempts to persuade the king to measures more befitting the honour of his crown, and seeing the discipline of the Church destroyed by a shameful compact between the Pope and the government at home, retired to the Cistercian house at Pontigny in France, to close his days in mortification and prayer.

But the most illustrious ornament of the Church of England in these times was Robert Grosteste, bishop of Lincoln, in the reign of Henry III., whose works contain abundant evidence that the love of Christ, and the study of Holy Scripture, were the foundation of his excellence.

The following is a specimen of his sermons. It is addressed to his clergy, and entitled, "The persuasion of good shepherds," on the text (St. John x. 11), "I am the good shepherd." "The good shepherd enters in at the right door, namely, by Christ preached: he maketh the sheep hear his voice, he calleth his own sheep by name, for he seeks to know those who are written in the book of life. And he not only knows them, but is known of them, by his works, his goodness, his labours of love; as Christ says, 'I know my sheep,

and am known of mine.' He leadeth them out of sin: link by link as their sins connect them, so must the steps of true repentance set them free. He goeth before them, according to the injunction of St. Paul, 'Be an example to the flock in word, in conversation, in charity, in faith, in purity.' And lastly, he lays down his life for his sheep; and why not? when the least virtue is better than the bodily life, for the body lives only through the soul, and virtue is the life of God in the soul of man. If an householder should give his servant in charge a worthless penny and a most precious sheep, and the servant should be able to save the life of the sheep by losing the worthless penny, would he not be a wretch to hesitate? Who then should refuse to lose his worthless body for the sake of saving a precious soul? when instead of the worthless penny, the corruptible body, he shall receive a golden treasure, a body incorruptible[1]."

But it is remarkable that all those who were most distinguished for their piety and learning in these times, were strong in their indignation against the Papal Court. And none more so than Grosteste, who went in person to the Council of Lyons, A.D. 1250, and there delivered a protest to the Pope and Cardinals, which contained these words, in which perhaps we may hope that there is something of the style of hyperbole, which seems to have been in fashion in the Latin orations of the day. "Pastors who do not preach Christ, even if they have no other sin, are Antichrist, and Satan transformed into an Angel of light[2]. But these Pastors add all sorts of sins besides. They are all luxurious, fornicators, adulterers, incestuous, indulgent of their appetite to excess, and to be short, all defiled together with all

---

[1] *Fasciculi Appendix*, p. 260, edition 1690.

[2] It was this sentence of Bishop Grosthead that was so much relied upon, and so often quoted by the followers of Wycliffe. "The priest that preacheth not the word of God, though he have none other default, he is Satanas and Antichrist."

sorts of sin and wickedness and abomination." And then with a noble boldness, he tells the Pope and Cardinals; "But what is the cause, the fount and origin of this? I exceedingly fear to say, and yet I dare not be silent, lest I fall under that woe of the prophet who says,—Woe is me, because I was silent, for I am a man of unclean lips[1]. The cause, the fount and origin of it is THIS COURT[2];" after which he describes the profligacy and venality of the Court of Rome.

At this same Council of Lyons, the representatives of the English nation declared that the number of foreigners to whom the Pope had given preferments in England was so great that 60,000 marks were carried out of the country yearly by foreign clergy; and this was afterwards stated at 70,000. For the Pope now assumed the power to nominate to all preferments, and constantly bestowed the best bishopries and livings on Italians, sometimes on boys and libertines. Grosthead himself was afterwards suspended for refusing to induct an Italian boy to a rich living in his diocese given him by the Pope. It is said that the exactions demanded from the diocese of Lincoln alone, in his time, were 6000 marks in one year, equal to 20,000*l.* of our money. The former sum stated to have been extracted from the whole kingdom would now be not less than 200,000*l.*; but a better way of judging of these amounts may be to compare them with some other payment near the same time. Thus the ransom of the King of Scots, taken prisoner by Edward III., was 100,000 marks, but the sum was so large that the Scots were allowed to pay it by instalments, 10,000 marks a year. So the largest diocese in England, paid in one year to the Pope or his dependents, more than half as much as the kingdom of Scotland could afford for the ransom of their king[3].

---

[1] Isaiah vi. 5. In our version "For I am undone," instead of "Because I was silent."

[2] *Fasc App.* p. 252.

[3] It is said to have been shown in Parliament, A.D. 1532, in the reign of Henry VIII., that there had been paid for the bulles

Edmund Rich was succeeded at Canterbury by Boniface of Savoy, a foreigner, a rude and violent man, without any qualities befitting such an office, to which his only recommendation was, that he was uncle to the queen. On his death the Pope sent over Robert Kilwardby, a Franciscan friar, who a few years afterwards carried off the treasures of the see to Italy, to support him in the new honour of a cardinalship, for which he resigned it. Then came another Franciscan friar, John Peckham, a man in some respects of better stamp, a restorer of discipline, and one who strove to mitigate the harsh conduct of Edward I. towards the Welch people; but trained, by a long practice as one of the judges of the Pope's court at Rome, to deeds of severity, and blinded by cruel superstition. After paying a sum of 4000 marks to the Pope for his presentation, equal to about 15,000*l.* of our present money, his first act was to excommunicate his brother primate, Walter Giffard, of York, for coming into his province with his silver cross borne before him. Giffard was travelling towards London with his retinue, and the monasteries and other places of entertainment on their way shut their doors against him, so that he was soon driven by peril of famine to submission. His next remarkable act was the issuing of an order to level to the ground all the Jewish synagogues within his province; a singular mark of the extent to which he thought it allowable to exercise the independent authority of the mitre without consulting the crown. Here, however, his proceeding was checked by Edward I., who had his own plans to carry, by commanding forbearance.

It was in this king's reign, and during Peckham's primacy, A. D. 1290, that the Jews were finally expelled

---

of Bishops (for institution, that is, to their sees), since the 4th year of Henry VII., in fourty-four years, one million and sixty thousand pounds, besides what had been exacted for dispensations and indulgences.—(HOLLINGSHEAD, *Chron.* p. 928.) The treasure left by Henry VII., the wealthiest prince of his age, was one million eight hundred thousand pounds.

from England, where they had resided since the time of Edward the Confessor. Their history presents a gloomy picture of the manners of the age. In the early Norman reigns, by practising peaceful and profitable arts, while the people neglected them, they had amassed considerable wealth. They were physicians, goldsmiths, and jewellers, and are supposed to have directed their industry to the working of mines in the mineral districts; but their most gainful employment was found in lending money, and granting letters of credit from one part of the kingdom to another. The advantage of this practice, at a time when travelling with a sum of money was not quite so safe as it is now, was very soon perceived. The kings and their ministers encouraged it, at the same time turning it to a source of revenue, by having every money-bill enrolled at some public office, and requiring a fee upon it from the borrower and lender.

They had enjoyed more than a century of peaceful commerce, when at the accession of Richard I. they were marked out as victims to the popular fury. The first outbreak was in London, at the time of this king's coronation; thence it spread to Lynn, Stamford, and Lincoln, and Bury St. Edmund's, with less violence; but it ended with a dreadful massacre, partly occasioned by their own suspicious fears, in the city of York. The leaders of the populace in this bloody deed were some thriftless profligates, who resorted to murder to cancel their debts, and to recover their bonds deposited in the public office by the Jews; but it could not have been perpetrated had not some fanatical priests and monks encouraged it, who were seen actively engaged in the assault. It is well known that the Jews, distrusting the protection given them by the Norman governor, had taken their opportunity, while he was gone out of the castle, to overpower the guard, and close the gates against him. This rash measure, turning their only means of safety to their own destruction, united all parties against them. They were closely

besieged; and in their despair the greater part, following the counsel of an aged rabbin, fell by their own hands. The rest, being unable to maintain the defence, offered to surrender and receive baptism, the only terms on which life was offered them; but they were cruelly butchered, in breach of treaty, by a miscreant called Richard le Maubête, or the *Ill Beast*, as soon as they had passed the barrier.

The only life lost on the side of the besiegers (it would be an abuse of words to call it the Christian side) was that of a vile priest, in the garb of a hermit, who had once been a canon in the order of the Premonstrants. He is said to have been so persuaded that the act in which he was about to engage was a religious service, that he received the holy communion himself, and administered it to a chosen party of followers, before he went to join in the fray! There, as he was busying himself in the foremost rank, and leading an onset or attempt that was made to scale the wall, a large stone hurled from the battlements scattered his brains, and cut short his fanatic exhortations to those around. The other instigators of the tumult discovered their real motive in the part they took, by going immediately to the register-office at the cathedral, and obtaining possession of the bonds deposited there, which they committed to the flames.

This atrocity was prompted in some measure by the fierce zeal then prevalent for the crusades, which made the ignorant people regard the destruction of the infidel, Turk or Jew, as a religious duty. But the Church had hitherto done something to restrain such madness. St. Bernard, in the earlier part of the same century, indignantly condemns the conduct of a monk, well named Rodolph the Vile, who had attempted to provoke a persecution against the Jews in Germany. The famous Carthusian saint, Hugh, bishop of Lincoln, who lived in the time of Richard I. and John, took some commendable pains to prevent a man from being honoured as a martyr, who had robbed a Jew, but had

afterwards himself been murdered at Northampton for the sake of his plunder. And William of Newborough, an Austin canon residing in the neighbourhood, and an historian of the time, calls this tragedy at York an act of execrable butchery.

There is some difficulty in sifting the evidence with regard to those insults which the Jews of the middle ages are said to have committed against Christians. The tumult at Lynn is said to have been occasioned by an attempt which they made on the life of one of their own nation, who had become a Christian convert, and by their assault upon the church into which he had fled for refuge. The stories of their cruelties to Christian children are told in the chronicles with the usual circumstances of facts; and sometimes, on a trial ensuing, the accused are stated to have confessed their guilt. In an age when men of different faiths were fierce in hostility against each other, it is not improbable that the feelings of humanity on either side should have been blunted; that the Jews should have had their rancour against the cross embittered by the wrongs which they endured;—at least it is not consistent with the acknowledged principles of human nature, that all the cruelty and fanaticism should have been only on the Christian side[1].

The wrongs they suffered were indeed extreme. King John, when he made his gaol-deliveries, excepted the Jews from the common benefit. Henry III. on one occasion confiscated a third of all their property. Edward I. seized, imprisoned, and heavily fined the whole body for a supposed conspiracy in clipping the coin; on which charge great numbers suffered death. Lastly, about nine years after he had checked the outrage purposed by Peckham, the parliament came to a bargain with the king for their entire deportation,

[1] So late as A.D. 1701, a Jew of immense wealth turned his only daughter out of doors utterly destitute for having embraced Christianity; an act which occasioned the passing of a new statute. BLACKSTONE, b. i. c. 16.

granting him a fifteenth of all property, on condition that the Jews should quit the realm. They were then a body of more than fifteen thousand persons, who were expelled almost in utter destitution: and they appeared no more in England till the time of Cromwell.

Only one act of a more merciful kind is recorded. In the early part of his reign King Henry III. was persuaded to found in London a religious house for the instruction and maintenance of such Jews as should be converted to the Christian faith. It stood to the east of Chancery Lane, and the church which belonged to it is now the chapel of the Rolls. It was under the government of a master and two or three chaplains, and continued for about a century and half, or eighty years after the expulsion of the Jews. It would appear that some number of converts were received into it; and there were found good Christians who sought conferences with them for removal of their prejudices. But the ill-treatment, which was more prevalent, made the time unfavourable for such efforts. The good Archbishop Bradwardine, who lived a century later, relates a conversation which passed between him and a Jew, shewing the strength of his ancient prejudices. At the close of it, "If you will not hear my reasons," said Bradwardine, "at least promise me that you will pray for me, as I will for you, that God may remove the error from the heart of one or the other of us, and show whether of us follows that law which is most acceptable in His sight." "No," said the Jew; "for this would be to doubt concerning the truth of my own law; and I have no such doubt. I cannot therefore pray for myself as you desire, nor can I consent that you should pray thus for me." "Yet," persisted Bradwardine, "if you will not pray for yourself, nor take it kindly if I pray for you, I would still entreat you to pray for me, and in those terms in which I have offered to pray for you." "And this I said (the good archbishop here remarks), hoping at least to melt his

hard and stubborn heart to kinder feelings by the benefit of prayer. But this also he peremptorily refused. 'I know,' said he, 'that you will never be a good Jew; and even if you choose to doubt about the truth of your law, I will never doubt of mine.'"

Such answers mark the effect of persecution on the human heart. They would not have been given had the Church during this interval produced many Bradwardines. But the prelates who, under papal influence, were employed to watch over the flock of Christ, were very few of them gifted with either talents or virtues like to his. The very pretence on which the investiture had been claimed by the disciples of Hildebrand was now virtually abandoned; and the worthless favourites of weak princes were appointed by the pope's connivance as easily as if there had been no appeal to Rome. On the death of Archbishop Winchelsey, in A.D. 1313, a man of learning and charity, though too subservient to Rome, the monks of Canterbury had chosen Thomas Cobham, canon of St. Paul's, a man whose good doctrine and innocency of life had gained him the name of *the Good Clerk*. Edward II., however, had a friend of his own to serve, Walter Raynold, a man of low origin, being the son of a baker at Windsor; but this should have been no hinderance to his promotion had he been otherwise worthy. The Avignon pope, Clement V., seems to have made little inquiry on this point, being influenced by other considerations. He gladly joined with the king to destroy the free election of bishops, and appointed Raynold on his own authority. The new archbishop made it his first object, by leaving a good retaining-fee at the papal court, and a promise of an annual payment, to secure himself against all appeals that might be made in England against his proceedings. There was some ground for this, if he could not act independently of the pope, nor obtain the rights of his primacy otherwise; for vexatious appeals thus made against the bishops were among the crying evils of the system.

But the next step was less equivocal. He obtained bulls of privileges, which must be enumerated, to show how far the papacy had restrained the due authority of bishops, while it usurped the power of licensing them to do many things that were neither consistent with good discipline or good faith. 1. A privilege to visit his own province of Canterbury during the next three years, during which time the suffragan bishops were to exercise no jurisdiction. 2. A privilege to restore two hundred religious persons who had broken their rule, to their monasteries. 3. To dispense with the rule about ordaining none below the canonical age, which was then twenty-five, so as to ordain one hundred priests or deacons who had not reached that age. 4. To give absolution to one hundred persons who had assaulted clergymen, such offenders being then bound to seek absolution of the pope. 5. To dispense with the canon-law against pluralities in the case of forty beneficed clergymen. 6. A privilege to grant pardons for every offence committed within a hundred days to all who sought it, wherever he went on his visitation[1]. There is scarcely one of these privileges which does not bear upon the face of it a strong presumption that the object was to sell his episcopal acts and functions for money. And the long-continued term which he stipulated for has something of a mercenary appearance; for the primate, on his visitation, expected to find free quarters; and his attendants, a body of eighty men mounted, man and horse, were to be entertained at the cost of the suffragans[2].

He was interrupted, however, in his progress by the troubles of the state; and we must follow him to take a view of his political character. It was only in the spirit of the times that he interfered to prevent Adam Orleton, bishop of Hereford, from answering, in the King's Court, to a charge of treason, which his sub-

[1] Godwin, *in vit. Raynold.*
[2] Hist. of Rochester, in *Anglia Sacra*, 369.

sequent conduct proved to be too well founded. But he had been himself tutor to the unhappy Edward II., and owed his preferment to him; and there is something shocking in the grey-haired perfidy of this low-minded prelate, when we see him coming forward, in a meeting of the rebellious Londoners, at Guildhall, at which it was resolved to dethrone the king, and saying, "The voice of the people is the voice of God[1]." Whether influenced by fear, or deliberately joining in the revolt, the guilt is nearly equal.

Yet in this century also, we may still trace the same stream of good men mingling with the turbid waters, and in each case we find them longing and praying for better things. Of these was Richard Rolle, called the Hermit of Hampole, from a place near Doncaster, who lived in the reigns of Edward II. and III., and died A.D. 1349. He translated some parts of Scripture into English, and expressed his earnest desire for a translation of the whole, by applying these words of the Psalmist, "Oh take not the word of thy truth utterly out of my mouth." He is thought to be the author of one of the earliest English poems, called the *Pricke of Conscience*, and his writings were very popular, and exercised an extensive influence. What was the nature of that influence may be judged by the following

[1] It has sometimes been supposed that he brought forward these words as a text of Scripture, and preached from them; but this seems to be a mistake. Adam Orleton had taken as a text before the University of Oxford, 2 Kings iv. 19: "My head! my head!" and preached a sermon to prove to them that the body politic would never be sound till it had a new head. Raynold spoke indeed in a popular assembly; but it was usual for bishops to begin their speeches in parliament with scripture texts, and he seems to have substituted this misapplied proverb instead. But what a departure from old English principles! "The people must be led according to the divine laws, not blindly followed," says Alcuin; "for you only trust the testimony of the good and honest. Never listen to those who say, The voice of the people is the voice of God. There is always something akin to madness in the sudden movements of the multitude." *To Charlemagne*, Epist. cxxvii.

specimens from an unpublished commentary on the Book of Job[1]. "What is man, that thou shouldest magnify him? and that thou shouldest set thy heart upon him[2]? Oh wondrous condescension of the Creator, oh immense benignity of the Redeemer! For what is man?—a mass of putrefaction, a vessel of abomination, food for worms:—prone to evil, slow to good, fast linked to earthly things, banished far from heavenly joys. What then is man? Man is become like unto vanity, whom God made in the image and likeness of himself. Justly, therefore, do the days of man pass like a shadow: but if man had not sinned, he would have remained throughout unchangeable and unchanged. Wherefore, listen, O man, to thy misery, understand thy poverty, and behold thy fall. Thou hast fallen down from the delight of Paradise to want and hunger; falling among thieves, thou hast been left stripped and wounded and half dead. Arise, O man, from the nets of ruin, and breathe again toward the kingdom. There are all delights, there the odours of all sweets, there is all beauty, and the fulness of every joy."

The same writer has the following beautiful contemplations on the name of Jesus, from the Song of Solomon, (c. i. 3), "Thy name is ointment poured out, therefore do the virgins love thee." "O wondrous, O delightful name; for this thy name is most high above every name, without which no man whatever may hope for salvation. For sweet is that name and pleasant to the human heart, affording true consolation. For Jesus is in my mind a song of joy, in my ear a heavenly sound, in my mouth a honeyed taste: no wonder, then, if I love that name which affords me solace in my every straight[3]."

Of the same age was Richard Fitzralph, archbishop

[1] Lincoln Minster Library, MS. D. 5, 12.

[2] Job vii. 17.

[3] Lincoln MS. ibid. See Hampole's *Seven Marks of the Spirit of God*, in Archdeacon Churton's *Early English Church*, p. 379.

of Armagh, and thence more commonly known as *Armachanus*, from whose *Apology against the Friars*, delivered to the Pope at Avignon, A.D. 1352, we derive the best and most authentic account of the miserable condition of the Church in the fourteenth century. He is said to have translated the Bible into Irish, at a time when there was as yet no English version of Holy Scripture, and when the policy of the Government had been to suppress and discountenance both languages. Having been invited to preach in London, he had delivered seven or eight sermons in English against the practices of the friars, and especially against the way in which they interfered with the ministerial office, by taking the confessions of the people themselves, instead of the parish priest. Churchmen did not mind abusing one another in Latin; but an appeal to the people, such as these English sermons, from the primate of Ireland, gave great offence. The friars appealed to the Pope; and the Archbishop's apology is called the Defence of Curates, that is, of parish priests, against the friars. He laboured with all the eloquence and skill of which he was master, (and he was one of the best preachers of his time,) to destroy the privileges of the mendicant orders; but he pleaded at Avignon before Clement VI., one of the most prodigal and profligate of men; and the mendicants did not want money to secure their cause.

Of a mind equally sincere, and of deeper wisdom, was Thomas Bradwardine, who, at the close of a blameless life, was made Archbishop of Canterbury by the purest of all elections, the choice of the king and of the clergy of the cathedral being unanimous. This good man was a noble example of the union of religious contemplation with active benevolence. He was chaplain to Edward III., and attended his armies in France, where he was so beloved, both by the monarch and his soldiers, that he was sometimes able to mitigate the cruelty of the war by his intercessions. He was twice chosen to the archbishopric; the king refusing, on

the first occasion, to part with his faithful confessor. When he went to Avignon to be confirmed in his new dignity, the profligate court received him with an act of unmannerly and heartless insult. A nephew of Clement's introduced into the hall a person habited like a peasant and seated on an ass, with a petition to the Pope that he would be pleased to appoint him to the see of Canterbury. But this was a case in which the dignity of virtue was conspicuous; the Pope and the other cardinals resented the affront, and sent him back with due honour. Unfortunately he scarcely lived to enter upon his office, dying within six weeks after.

There can be no doubt that his great work, *The Cause of God pleaded against Pelagius*, was suggested by the state of doctrine taught by the friars at the Universities in his time. All writers on the doctrines of grace are in some danger of not allowing all that is due on the other side to the consideration of God's justice. But Bradwardine wrote always with one design, to exalt the power and mercy of the Most High. Our plan does not admit of a description of the doctrinal parts of this spiritual and excellent treatise, which was the labour of his life, and gained him, not undeservedly, the title of the "Profound Doctor." But the following specimen of his sentiments on the subject of prayer, will show the character of the man. "I think there cannot be any prayer more profitable or more efficacious, whether in prosperity or adversity, whether concerning what one desires or what one would avoid, than that one may always be able to say unto the Lord, with one's whole heart and soul and strength, Thy will be done. For thus it will come to pass that one shall keep back nothing to oneself, but be able to submit oneself and all one has to the divine will; wholly desiring the glory and honour of God, and never one's own, whether in great things or small, fearing nothing and caring for nothing in itself, but gladly embracing, if need be, for the sake of God, the loss of riches, honour, and fame,—disgrace, ridicule, persecutions, and what-

ever miseries, except the displeasure alone of Almighty God."

The prelates of these ages rigidly enforced the law of celibacy, as they had learned it from the practice of Gregory VII. and Innocent III.; for however this law had been attempted earlier, it is not pretended that it was generally enforced before this period. Indeed, the case of Gregory I., A.D. 590, the second founder of the English Church, is in itself a refutation of all notion of its having been a primitive practice. For he was the grandson or great grandson of another pope, Felix III., whose father Felix was also a presbyter; and these facts are twice mentioned by Gregory himself in his works still extant[1]. The compulsion of such a law must be regarded as an unmixed evil. The immoral consequences of it, with those who were tempted to break their vow, are recorded in every page from the time of Hildebrand downwards. And it is plain that in many instances the poorer offenders against this law suffered, while the more powerful escaped. But there were other consequences, perhaps not less pernicious, to those who were enabled to keep it. "It is not possible," says a wise ancient[2], "that he can be a good member of the state, and love justice and equity, who has no children to expose to danger if his country suffers." The law in itself had a tendency to prevent them from being good subjects, more especially when the interests of Church and State were so divided. "Wife and children," says Lord Bacon, "are a kind of discipline of humanity; and single men, though they be many times more munificent and charitable, because their means are less exhausted, yet they are, on the other side, more cruel and hard-hearted, because their

[1] *Homil.* 38, in *Evan.*, § 15. *Dialog.*, lib. 4, cap. 16. See SANDINI, *Vit. Pont.*, pp. 130, 590. There were married priests in Spain so late as the fourteenth century. A Council at Palencia in Leon, A.D. 1388, regulates their garb and tonsure. L'ENFANT, *Conc. Pis.*, Pref. xxvii.

[2] THUCYDIDES.

indulgence and tenderness is not so often called into play." The rise of the terrible Inquisition in other countries was indeed an immediate consequence of the establishment of the papal power, and of this law rigidly enforced with it. This fearful scourge was not yet brought into England, but the spirit of it had been manifested in Peckham's mandate against the Jews; and we shall soon see it brought to its height by the primates of Wycliffe's time, Courtney and Arundel.

CHAPTER VI.

STATE OF THE MONASTERIES IN WYCLIFFE'S TIME. CHANTRIES. THEIR INSTITUTION, AND PURPOSES.

Vain the worshippers who strove
God with idols to divide;
Ne'er may man his spirit's love
Give to Heav'n and aught beside.—
CÆDMON, § 50.

HEN in these days we look upon the ruined abbey, standing in peaceful solitude, in scenes which nature seems to have spread for the abode of calm content and prayer, it is not easy nor always agreeable to call to mind the true facts on record concerning the usual inmates of these dwellings; how soon the piety that reared them declined; how often their own vices, without the aid of the arm of power, brought on their ruin; how their numbers fell away, as their reputation decayed; and public opinion, in the course of a few more years, would probably have accomplished, in many instances, what was hastened only a little sooner by the will of an arbitrary king.

It is not to be supposed that in former days the heart of man was inaccessible to a sense of the beauties of creation, or that this feeling was not often called forth in these retirements, and expressed by devout minds in thanksgiving and adoration. Take Gyraldus's description of one, which still remains to attest the truth of his description—Lantony, in Monmouthshire. "In the deep vale of Ewias, which is about a bowshot over, and enclosed on all sides with high mountains, stands a church dedicated to St. John the Baptist, a structure roofed with lead, and not unhandsomely built for the remote situation in which it stands. It is a

spot on which formerly stood a little humble chapel of St. David the Archbishop, which had no other ornaments than woodland moss and wreaths of ivy. In truth, it is a place fit for the abode of religion, and as well furnished as any British monastery with the means of canonical discipline. Two hermits first founded it to the honour of a solitary life, in a wild far removed from the noise of the world, on the banks of the river Hondy, which rolls down the deepest part of the valley. . . . . The rains, which mountainous districts usually produce, are here very frequent; the winds high and strong; the winters dark, with almost continual mists and clouds. Yet the air of the valley is so happily tempered, as scarcely to be the cause of any diseases; so that the brothers from a younger foundation at Gloucester, even when worn out with labour, and seeming past cure, if brought for change of climate to the parent house, by a little nursing are restored to health. Here the monks, sitting in their cloisters, when they choose to refresh their eyes by looking upward from their books, may see rising over the roofs of their dwellings on every side the mountain-tops which seem to touch the sky; and often the goats or wild-deer, with which this district abounds, feeding on the summit, and appearing as if at the verge of their horizon. The orb of the sun is seldom visible above the hills, even in the fine summer season, before half-past seven in the morning. It is a spot marked out for heavenly contemplation, a spot happily chosen, and one that moves the kind affections; and in its first days well provided and well governed, till it was wronged by the intrusion of English luxury[1]."

No doubt there were many who found refuge in such places, in whom the flame of devotion burnt brightly, and their sense of the mercies of redemption was a strong solace amidst the troubles of oppressors, and the rude manners of a half-barbarous age. We have

[1] *Itinerary of Wales*, b. i. c. iii., written about A.D. 1220.

writings of the English monks of the twelfth century, and some of later date, which speak of Divine love in language such as might be studied with advantage now. Nor could anything but a devoted zeal have effected that great sacrifice of wealth, which was poured in during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, wherever a monastery began to rear its head. It is a circumstance, as a well-informed and amiable man has well remarked[1], "which must strike every thinking person with some degree of wonder. No sooner had a monastic institution got a footing, but the neighbourhood began to be touched with a secret and religious awe. Every person round was desirous to promote so good a work; and either by sale, by grant, or by gift in reversion, was ambitious of appearing a benefactor. They who had not lands to spare, gave roads to accommodate the infant foundation." When Matthew Paris, the historian of the time, asked Richard, earl of Cornwall, to tell him the cost of his foundation of the Cistertian abbey at Hayles, in Gloucestershire, "I have laid out," he said, "ten thousand marks in the erection of the church only. And would to God that what I have laid out upon my castle at Wallingford had been spent as wisely and as well." The same sentiments were felt and expressed by the religious persons of the age. William of Newborough, an Austin canon of Yorkshire, speaks thus of the Abbey of Fountains, then a new foundation: "The place," said he, "is called Fountains; where, from the time of its foundation, many souls have drank, as from the fountains of their Saviour, of the waters springing up to everlasting life." And again, of Rievaulx and Byland, near which he lived, "What are such religious dwellings but the camps of God, where the soldiers of Christ our King keep guard, and the recruits are trained against the assaults of spiritual wickedness?" Such language may be imbued with the prejudices of the time in

[1] Gilbert White, *Hist. of Selborne*, part ii. lett. 7.

favour of a monastic life, and those prejudices may be mistaken, or such a life may be unsuitable to a different state of society; but it is the language of Christian piety, and it spoke of feelings which the writer had himself experienced.

Whatever benefit, however, these foundations conferred upon their time and country, it is plain that the first fervour soon declined. The chief revival after the Norman Conquest was that effected by the Cistertians and Austin Canons; and their frugal industry, hospitality, and charity, is abundantly attested. But in the next age we find them chiefly mentioned as following Reuben's choice, "abiding among the sheep-folds, and listening to the bleatings of the flocks." They drove a great trade in wool, and industry degenerated into avarice. No doubt this was productive of public good; and when the military barons despised agriculture, and left the production of food to be the task of their slavish serfs and thralls, it was well if any class in society taught the people how to improve and value the wealth of the country. Their care and charity enabled them to relieve, in times of dearth, the famishing and improvident. But the public opinion of them soon followed the well-known saying of Richard I., in which he characterised three of the leading orders. A religious man in France, of high reputation for sanctity, was prompted to administer to this bold monarch a reproof: "You have three daughters at home," said he, "whom you love more than the grace of God:—they are Madam Pride, Luxury, and Avarice." The king, surprised at the suddenness of the strange address, made a little pause: "My friend," said he, "they are no longer at home:—I have married my daughter Pride to the Templars, Luxury to the Black Monks, and Avarice to the Cistertians." The pride and insolence of those military monks, the Templars, was brought to an end long before the time of Wycliffe. The most monstrous charges were advanced against them, of which it is impossible to believe that the whole body were at all

guilty, of impiety and uncleanness. There is more reason to believe that they were ruined from political causes. The King of France, Philip the Fair, had the Pope at his command, and he was afraid of the wealth and power of the Templars; or, as a sincere English writer of the time reports[1], the grand master of the Templars had lent him a large sum of money, which he took this means of cancelling. If the character of this king was like that of his daughter, the queen of Edward II., this is not improbable. But the old Temple at Paris was of such extent, and maintained so many inmates, that any King of France might well fear that these martial churchmen might prove as dangerous to him as the prætorian guards were to the Roman emperors, or the janissaries to the Great Turk[2]. It can hardly be doubted, though great cruelty and injustice was shown in the means used, that a sound policy would have advised their dispersion.

By the Black Monks, King Richard probably meant both the old Benedictines and the Cluniacs. These last were early noted for thriftless waste and selfish luxury. "Give them," says Gyraldus, "a place to dwell in, furnished with handsome buildings, and endowed with large revenues and broad lands; yet within a short time you will find it impoverished and ruined." They did not even keep the first rule of common property, by living on one common purse; but each took what he could get assigned to himself, and left the public fund destitute. The houses founded for poor monks were turned into rich bachelors' halls, where the good fellows hawked and hunted, and made a merry life of it. And charity waxed cold; they would sooner

---

1 Sir Thomas de la More.

2 When Henry III. went on a visit to St. Louis in A.D. 1254, he was attended by a guard of honour of about 1000 mounted knights and squires. They were all easily lodged and entertained in the Temple, which had buildings large enough to take in an army.—MATT. PARIS.

mortgage their estates, and let the poor die at their gates, says Gyraldus, than have one dish diminished from their tables. In fact, there is scarcely one instance of a member of this order who served either the Church of England by his piety and learning, or the state by his counsels.

Of the old Benedictines a more respectable character must be given. Their houses had been the nurseries of the Church; and it was not a change for the better, when first the bishops began to be taken from among the secular clergy or the later monastic orders. Here whatever learning there was in England and in Western Europe, had been preserved. And here still were to be found those who kept faithful chronicles of their time, and registered the annals of our native land. The monks of Westminster, St. Alban's, Croyland, Malmsbury, and Glastonbury; and of the cathedral churches, Canterbury, Winchester, Worcester, and Durham, and many other Benedictine houses,—are men to whom we owe the most instructive records of the past. It is only want of information that has led some to speak with contempt of monkish historians, as if they were not the best qualified of all men to give a true picture of the events and manners of their time. "They who indulge in such ridicule," says an able modern critic[1], "must forget that these monkish writers were often men of princely descent; that they were entrusted with the most important offices of state, and therefore could best explain them; that in general they were the most accomplished and intelligent men whom the world could then produce; and that, in one word, if we were to have any histories at all of those ages, it was absolutely necessary they should be written by the monks. Perhaps," he adds, "the very best of situations for a writer of history is one not widely differing from that of a monk; one in which he enjoys good opportunities of gaining experimental knowledge of men and their

[1] SCHLEGEL, *Lectures on the Hist. of Literature.*

affairs, but is at the same time independent of the world, and has full liberty to mature in retirement his reflections upon that which he has seen." In England especially it was the common practice for Norman kings to keep their Christmas at some of the great abbeys; and the house of parliament, in the fourteenth and fifteenth century, was most commonly the monks' refectory at Westminster.

While, however, we praise the learned diligence and candour of William of Malmsbury, the patience, good humour, and love of his country, which are the praiseworthy qualities of Matthew Paris,—and something of the same praise is due to many more,—there are also certain signs, by which we can judge of the defective morals, the dissipation, the quarrels and bickerings, and the worldliness, which were often found within these monasteries. The history of the monastery of Glastonbury for a long period is nothing but the record of a long-sustained quarrel with the Bishops of Bath and Wells, whose property in certain manors the monks had seized upon. The same disputes arose at Canterbury, at Lichfield and Coventry, and at Durham, and wherever there was a Benedictine priory at the Cathedral Church. As we come down nearer to Wycliffe's time, we find things growing worse. The benefits which had accrued to society were passing fast away; and irreligion and hard-heartedness succeeded. We may suppose the historian Walsingham, who was nearly contemporary with Wycliffe, to express the monastic feelings of his time. He was a man, whose mind seems to dwell with satisfaction on acts of persecution, cruel executions, and bloody laws, whose praise is given to the proud and merciless, who condemns all lenity as cowardice or connivance at crime[1].

---

[1] It is strange that Collier should have taken the representations of this ill-tempered man, who cannot speak of Wycliffe without calling him "an angel of darkness,"—or by his miserable pun upon his name, "Wicked-belief,"—as a fair statement of his doc-

There is one remarkable fact in the later history of these monasteries, which alone speaks much to prove the selfish luxury into which they had fallen. On no estates did *slavery* linger so long in England, as on those of the Benedictine Abbots and their convents. In the rebellion of Wat Tyler, the sudden extension of which through a great part of England was a sad proof of the misery of the poorer classes through the oppression of the great, the slaves on the lands of St. Alban's and other abbeys flocked to join the revolt, and to demand their freedom. The abbot temporised for his own safety, being advised by the court of the danger of the time. The mob were supplied with beer and provisions at the gate; and the monks prepared charters of freedom for the contentment of all who asked for them. It might be right that these deeds, which were so extorted, should afterwards be all cancelled: but if there had been any wisdom or mercy to advise with in the monastery, this hint would not have been lost, and they would have begun at once to turn these poor dependents into free labourers. On the contrary, these poor dependents found the monks their hardest masters; and at the dissolution of Glastonbury alone, there were on the estate of that monastery nearly three hundred bondmen, whose bodies and goods were transferred from the abbot to the king[1].

When we recollect how much pains the early Saxon bishops and ecclesiastics had taken to promote the liberation of slaves, and the pious labours of the Benedictine bishop Wulstan at the period of the Conquest to the same purpose, it must appear that this was a strong proof of the decay of Christian charity and mercy; the more so, as at this period slavery was fast disappearing

---

trines. Collier's account is almost all taken from Walsingham, or Walden, the Carmelite, who said of Wycliffe at Oldcastle's trial, that he was "the mid-day devil." This learned historian seems to have had a prejudice against Wycliffe.

[1] The number was 271: HEARNE's *Langtoft*, p. 381.

in other quarters, and free labour, with industry and self-improvement, was advancing. They were not serfs or thralls, but the free-born yeomanry of England, whose strong arms and skill in archery gained the victories of Creci and Poictiers.

That much dissoluteness had spread into the great monasteries, as well as into those of the lesser sort and of less creditable orders, is evident from such privileges as that of Walter Raynald before mentioned as purchased at Rome, to restore two hundred religious persons who had broken their convent-vows. The bishops who followed the Roman model most, often procured privileges of this kind, as Cardinal Beaufort, Archbishop Arundel, and others. The prelates who were of better character, as William of Wykeham, Wainfleet, and Grostête, are recorded in many instances to have struggled in vain to reform the morals, the wasteful expenditure, and vagabond habits of the religious of both sexes.

But before Wycliffe's time the evil had advanced to this point, that the barons and great persons were offended by the rival pomp and state of my lord abbot, and the poor found no sympathy from the monks in their afflictions. If the Cistertian houses and Austin priories were in some degree free from the idleness and luxury of the rest, not living on rents, but by their own labour, yet they had fallen into great ignorance and neglect of humanising habits. The Cistertians and Carthusians had in their houses an equal or greater number of lay brothers with the professed monks; and these, being of an inferior class, were treated with less ceremony, expected to work harder, and sit in a lower seat. This led to divisions and difficulties. And these monasteries, which in their first age were crowded with inmates, became at last almost empty of both monks and lay brothers. Waverley Abbey, in Surrey, contained, in A.D. 1187, one hundred and twenty lay brothers and seventy professed monks. When it was dissolved by Henry VIII., there were only thirteen

religious persons remaining in it. It could never have been right or wise to keep up these splendid foundations, when they were becoming destitute of inhabitants.

But when the rage for the foundation of monasteries, which was carried to so great an extent for two centuries after the Conquest, began to subside, the same opinions which, though they did not originate, had greatly tended to multiply such institutions, gave rise to a minor sort of foundation, of which some account may be given. It was the primitive belief, abundantly confirmed by Holy Scriptures, that the souls of the departed are reserved by God in some middle state of consciousness until the final judgment. And in this faith they came in very early times to commend the souls of their departed friends together with themselves to God's gracious care. It was an innocent practice in itself, from which no one could have foreseen the steps by which succeeding ages would proceed to the belief of their being purified by penal fires, from which the prayers of the faithful could release them. But in proportion as this belief obtained, people became anxious to provide for themselves and their departed friends, those who should pray for their souls in purgatory, and offer what they considered the propitiatory sacrifice of the mass on their behalf. To give one instance. The beautiful Abbey of Bolton, in Yorkshire, is said to have been founded by a lady of the house of Clifford for the soul of her only son, drowned in stepping across a narrow part of the river Wharf. And one might envy the faith which would admit such precious tributes to human sorrow, if we did not know that it is human all and earthly, whereas the Gospel is heavenly.

> There now the matin bell is rung,
> The *miserere* duly sung,
> And holy men in cowl and hood
> Are wandering up and down the wood.

It had been usual in earliest times to celebrate the Holy Communion at funerals, and our Reformers, with

their usual regard for antiquity, endeavoured to restore the practice. Cranmer administered this holy sacrament himself at King Edward's funeral, and in the time of Elizabeth a special service for the purpose was authorised by Act of Parliament[1]. But the way in which this practice had degenerated into masses for the dead is thus told by Latimer, in one of his sermons. "The blessed Communion, the celebration of the Lord's supper, alack, it hath been long abused, as the sacrifices were before under the old law. Even so it came to pass with our blessed Communion. In the primitive Church, in places, when their friends were dead, they used to come together to the Holy Communion. What? to remedy them that were dead? No, not a straw, it was not instituted for no such purpose. But then they would call to remembrance God's goodness and his passion that he suffered for us, wherein they comforted much their faith. Other came afterward and set up all these kind of massing." Thus it had by degrees come to pass that private masses, or if it were not a contradiction, the private celebration of the Holy Communion, was deemed to be available for the souls of the departed, and people were anxious to obtain it for themselves and others. The founders of monasteries were accustomed to provide that prayers and masses should be offered for themselves and their families or friends. And this was the common object specified in the foundation of chantries; not indeed the sole object—for no doubt there were services intended by them for the living as well as for the dead.

It is to this custom that we owe those beautiful chapelries which still remain in the walls of many of our cathedrals and other churches, usually over the

[1] A.D. 1560, 2 Eliz.: see in Bp. Sparrow's *Collection*, p. 201, "An Act for Commemoration of Founders and Benefactors, &c.," and a "Form of Administering the Holy Communion at Funerals."

tomb of the person on whose behalf they were founded. Here, a priest was retained to say daily masses on the spot, and it was believed that the intention in the mind of the priest could appropriate the benefit of the mass to the soul for whose behoof it was intended. Sometimes a chantry was a separate building with no church attached to it, in which on certain days these services were to be performed. In other instances it was connected with hospitals or similar foundations, and it would seem that in general the officiating priest was intended to perform other offices besides that of masses for the dead. Thus a deed of Simon Langham, Archbishop of Canterbury, A.D. 1368, recites the foundation of the chantry at Eastbridge Hospital by Simon Islip, his predecessor, in which the purpose of the foundation is stated to be "the honour of God and of divine worship, and for the health of the souls of certain benefactors, of the hospital itself, and all the faithful departed[1]." The celebration of masses in this case was far from being the only duty of the priest; on the contrary, his duties seem to have been the same as if he had been appointed chaplain to the hospital; for the deed describes them to be the administration of the sacraments and sacramentals (confession and absolution) to the poor and strangers who came there, and to the sick in the hospital. For this purpose he was to have a residence in the hospital, a chamber over the gate; and was constantly to reside, never being absent a day without leave of the warden, and then to provide another priest to take his duty. A similar deed of Archbishop Whittlesey, A.D. 1371, appointing a chantry priest to the Hospital of St. Nicholas, Herbaldowne, declares that his purpose is to supply a proper priest to perform divine service in the Church of St. Nicholas for the poor of the hospital, to hear their confessions, and duly administer the holy sacra-

[1] SOMNER'S *Appendix to Hist. Canterbury*, p. 16.

ments to them day and night. In other cases the office seems to have been little else than that of private chaplain in a nobleman's or gentleman's family. Thus a charter of the convent of St. Augustine's at Canterbury, about A.D. 1260, gives permission to a gentleman to have a chantry in his chapel at Lukehall, in the parish of Littlebourne, to be served by his private chaplain.

But in other cases these foundations appear to have been introduced into places where the benefit of the living could hardly have been contemplated. Thus Richard de Ravenser, archdeacon of Lincoln, obtained a license in A.D. 1373 to alienate manors for the support of two chaplains daily to perform service in the church of Driby, for the health of the living and the souls of the faithful dead[1]. And not long after Robert de Bernack founded another chantry in the same church; so that in a parish, of which the population at the present day does not amount to one hundred persons, and which could not be greater then, three priests were provided for the service of the church, besides the parish rector. In like manner, in A.D. 1264, a chantry was founded for two chaplains, one to officiate in a free chapel in a certain dwelling-house in the parish of St. Paul, at Canterbury, and another at the altar of St. John Baptist in St. Paul's Church[2], and the number of these priests and their offices in cathedral churches marks the object of their institution. There were in St. Paul's, in London, thirty-five endowed chantries, and fifty-four priests employed to serve them[3]. The duties of these secluded ministers could scarcely have been any other than those described by one of our poets who had witnessed their suppression:—

---

[1] *Orig. Grossi Fines*, p. 339, as referred to in OLDFIELD'S *History of Wainfleet*.

[2] SOMNER, *ubi supra*.

[3] DUGDALE, *Hist. of St. Paul's*, p. xli, Pref.

> They whilome duly used everie day
> Their service, and their holy things to say;
> At morn and eve to sing their amthems sweet,
> Their pennie masses and their complines meet.

These chantries, however, and colleges of singing priests continued to multiply in England; and no doubt, as Wycliffe complains, to the decay of preaching and praying. In the first year of Edward VI., at which time these foundations were all suppressed and their endowments confiscated, the whole number returned was 2374.

When so much of the Church's alms, as it was called, was thus bestowed in idle superstition, it is no wonder if the poor became dissatisfied. It was a thing which common feeling and plain good sense pointed out as injurious to them, that charity should be so lavished, and men paid for saying or singing solitary services over the dead, whose office it was to pray with the living. Long before the Reformation these poor Sir Johns, as the chantry-priests were called, were held in great aversion by the common people; and they were commonly the most ignorant and least respectable of their tribe. As the rich and powerful had been estranged by the abuse of excommunication and the other obnoxious measures of the canon-law, so the poor were offended when the old monastic charities declined, when their instruction failed them more and more, and the mendicant friars came to beg a portion of the small pittance which was left to support their daily toil.

Boniface VIII. complained, in one of his most extravagant bulls, of "the ancient enmity" between the laity and the clergy. The same complaint often occurs in the English chronicles at this period; and the writers seem to speak of it as an incurable disease, under which the minds of the laity laboured. But where was this "ancient enmity" before the popes had set up their divided empire? Where was it in England, when King Oswald interpreted the discourses of Aidan

to his countrymen; or when the poor people crowded round a bishop as poor as themselves, and knelt to receive his blessing[1]? Where was it, when Alfred made his bishops the companions of his studies, the executors of his will, and distributors of his alms? The true state of the case is best described by an excellent candid writer of the French Church.

"It is true," says the Abbé Fleury, "that Jesus Christ said, *He came not to send peace on earth, but a sword.* But that was between His disciples and unbelievers, not among His disciples themselves. And in this war all the violence is to be on the part of the unbelievers; Christians are only to suffer without resisting. Such ought to be the conduct of churchmen; it is their part to make all advances to re-establish that unity which Christ has so recommended and given for a mark of His true disciples. It is the part of bishops to gain the respect and affection of the people by the holiness of their lives, their zeal for the salvation of their flock, their care in instructing them and procuring them all kinds of good, spiritual and temporal; by their gentleness, their patience, and all other Christian graces.

"But now they took a way altogether the opposite to this. There was nothing but sternness, high disdain, bitter complaints, piercing reproaches, threats, judicial processes, excommunications, and other censures; all means, not to extinguish the flame, but to make it burn the more. Thus the laity, provoked more and more, came often to open action and deeds of violence. They stopped on the road the persons who carried bishops' letters or mandates, took them from them, tore and destroyed them. They seized on the persons of clergymen, beat them, imprisoned them, made them ransom their lives, and sometimes even put them to death;—and for all this no remedy, but those censures which

[1] *See* CHURTON'S *Early English Church*, c. iv.

had already so often been despised. Such were the fatal effects of the division caused by the excessive extension of ecclesiastical power."

Happy had it been for them, if even at this point they had learnt to turn and seek that better way, by which alone a spiritual empire can be won, by which the primitive Christians had overcome their pagan torturers, and converted a world which lay in darker ignorance—

> Content to hold Love's banner fast,
> And by submission win at last.

CHAPTER VII.

THE MENDICANT ORDERS. THEIR RISE AND HISTORY.

He that hath seen a great oke drie and dead,
Yet clad with relics of some trophies olde,
Lifting to heaven her aged horie head,
Whose foote in ground hath left but feeble holde;
But though she owe her fall to the first winde,
She of the devout people is ador'd,
And manie young plants spring from out her rinde;—
Who such an oke hath seene, let him record,
That thus Rome's demon doth himself enforce
Againe on foote to reare her mouldred corse.

SPENSER: *Ruins of Rome.*

IT is a great error in looking back to past ages of the world or of the Church, to suppose that the human mind was less active then than it is now in striking out new notions, and attempting reforms and changes in government and society. On the contrary, where knowledge and education are less general, these revolutions are more frequent; more is done by force, and less by argument; fanatic ignorance acquires more followers; and mistaken systems are more rapidly established. There cannot be a more remarkable proof of this than in the rise, progress, and extension of the orders of religious mendicants, or begging friars. Their character and institutions were so different from the rules of the monks, or other regular clergy, that it is necessary to review them separately. And their influence on the Church was so great at certain intervals during the three centuries preceding the Reformation, that it is impossible to understand this great controversy without a clear view of their doctrines, discipline, and habits of living.

At a time when the English nation had begun to

grow a little jealous of the great increase and wealth of the monasteries, the popular mind was attracted by the arrival of some small bodies of religious persons, who professed to live supported only by their own labour, or the alms which they received from day to day, as they went from house to house to preach the Gospel. The Dominicans, or preaching friars, were the first who came, and they shortly afterwards procured a house at Oxford by the bounty of Isabel De Vere, Countess of Oxford, A.D. 1221. They were followed in A.D. 1224 by the Franciscans and Trinitarian friars, and about twenty years later by the Carmelites, Austin friars, Crouched, Pied, and Bethlemite friars, and other forgotten candidates for public favour, most of whom did little more than appear and disappear. As they were distinguished from each other by little else than their dress, it will be sufficient to trace the early history of one of their orders, and that the first in point of time, as well as the most numerous and popular, and which carried out the principle of religious mendicancy to the greatest excess —the Franciscans or Minorites. Of the Dominicans it may be allowed that they generally practised poverty more simply; they were diligent in preaching and teaching at Oxford, and other places, and maintained themselves by the wages of learning as tutors in families and domestic chaplains, or as professors and lecturers in schools.

It is scarcely possible to read the history of St. Francis of Assisi, the founder of the Franciscan order, without believing that there was in him a sincere and self-devoted, however ill-directed piety. The injunctions to his brethren to observe perpetual poverty, without condemning those who are rich; to be clad in coarse garments, without judging those who go in gay apparel; and to be cautious in receiving confessions, lest they should become too familiar with sin, are excellent. He was himself influenced by a missionary zeal, and is said to have preached the Gospel to the Sultan of Egypt in the face of hostile armies; and some of his earliest followers

imitating his example and going to preach to the Turks and Saracens, lost their lives among those infidels [1], while some of the crusaders, struck by their example, themselves embraced the order. The peculiar regulations which he was the first to introduce, were that those who entered the order should sell all they had and give to the poor; that they should possess no money; that they should labour for their food and clothing, and receive payment for labour in clothes or food instead of money; if labour failed them they might beg the necessaries of life, a permission which his followers seemed too generally to consider as a precept enjoining them to beg, and excusing them from labour. Those who were ignorant of letters were not to care to learn them, a permission which many interpreted as making a merit of illiterate ignorance, and it seems consistent with this that he encouraged illiterate lay-brothers into his order. He called his followers *friars minors*, as being less than the least of religious sects or fraternities; and their officers not masters or prelates, as in other orders, but *ministers*, that they might remember they were to be the servants of all.

On the other hand, it is equally clear that this self-devotion was under the influence either of a very weak or very enthusiastic temperament; though it is probable that the wildest stories that are told of him were the invention of his followers, not of himself: and the mind of the age seems to have been prepared for a sort of epidemic enthusiasm. He was represented as having been honoured in many respects with a resemblance to our Lord. It was said that his mother could not be delivered till she was removed into a stable, where he was born, and that he had a precursor, who went about Assisi and the neighbourhood proclaiming peace and health to all, and vanished when he began to preach.

[1] A.D. 1220. 261 years afterwards, A.D. 1481, Sixtus IV. recognised their martyrdom and allowed the Franciscans to celebrate their office. Their reliques were said to be at Coimbra.

But the most marvellous story was that of the *stigmata*, or five wounds of Christ, which it was said had been impressed upon his person by way of special honour. The history of this superstition of the stigmata is a singular instance of the growth of a popular delusion. The earliest allusion of the kind is the story which was read at the second Nicene council, from a spurious work of Athanasius[1], which relates that some Jews having in mockery pierced the hands and side of an image of Jesus, blood flowed from the wounds, and many Jews were converted by the miracle. But about the time of St. Francis, to show that there was prevalent a tendency to this enthusiasm, we find that two persons were condemned at a provincial council held at Oxford by Cardinal Langton in A.D. 1222, one of whom pretended to bear the marks of the five wounds, and to be sent on a special mission, and the other professed himself his follower; at which time, so far from gaining any credit for their imposture, it is related that both were punished, and one account, which we may hope is not correct, asserts that they were crucified[2].

These marks are said to have first appeared upon St. Francis in A.D. 1224, and he died two years after. There seems no reason to doubt that his body was exhibited in this state after his death, but the evidence of their existence before his death is of the slightest possible kind. It was pretended that he concealed them from modesty, and only one or two of his followers professed to have seen them by stealth before he died. The story was strongly objected to at the time, until Gregory IX. undertook to confirm it, and excommunicated all who should question it. On the whole, it seems more than probable that St. Francis, having an enthusiastic desire to be conformed unto Christ, and placing his notions of

[1] The learned Benedictine editors discredit the story, and say that it is obviously not the writing of Athanasius. It is called "The Passion of the Image of Jesus Christ."

[2] LABBE, tom. x. p. 287. MATT. WESTM., in *Flor. Hist.*

such conformity in abstract contemplations, might dream or fancy that a seraphim appeared to him on a cross, whose wounds were conveyed to himself. If he mentioned it to his followers, by whom he was idolized, and who were enthusiasts like himself, and looking out for miracles, prepared also as we have seen to think of such a thing by the reports already spread in one or two other cases, they would report that marks were visible, and one or two afterwards might fancy they had seen them, as Pope Alexander IV., A.D. 1254, affirmed that he had done. It would not be difficult under such circumstances for a few of his immediate attendants to persuade themselves when he died, that the credit of their order, and as they might think, the interests of religion itself, required a pious fraud to make the marks visible which they firmly believed he had received[1]. It was soon said to have been confirmed by miracles, and Mount Avernia, in Tuscany, where it was alleged to have taken place, was declared by a bull of Alexander IV. in A.D. 1255, to be taken under the especial protection of the Holy See. A festival was appointed by the Franciscans in honour of this event in A.D. 1337, which was extended by Paul V. to the whole Church in 1615, and Sixtus IV. in 1475 forbade the representation of any saint with these marks except St. Francis[2].

The rapidity with which the new orders spread was wonderful. It was in 1208 that St. Francis first began to preach, not being yet a priest, nor in any sort of orders. In the next year his society was sanctioned, not without some difficulty, by Innocent III., for it had but just been decreed by the Lateran council that no new orders should be permitted; but a cardinal who stood by, said to him, "Take care what you do, lest, in rejecting this poor man, you reject the Gospel itself." Innocent was struck by the words, and gave his assent.

---

[1] *Storia particolare delle Stigmata.* Assisi, 1804, 4to.

[2] See further about St. Catharine of Siena and the questions beween rival communities, App. B.

St. Dominic was then a canon of the cathedral church of Osma, in Spain, and had engaged a few associates on a mission to preach to the Albigenses of Languedoc, when he heard of this new vow of poverty. He immediately advised his companions to bind themselves by a similar vow and rule; and thus his order arose, who, from this first mission of theirs, in which their preaching was backed by the powers of the newly-founded Inquisition, were called preaching friars. The Carmelites appeared a few years later, when the popularity of such fraternities was on the increase; they professed to be newly arrived in Italy, driven out by the Saracens from the Holy Land, where they had remained on Mount Carmel from the time of Elisha the prophet. They assert that "the sons of the prophets" had continued on Mount Carmel as a poor brotherhood till the time of Christ, soon after which they were miraculously converted, and that the Virgin Mary joined their order and gave them a precious vestment called a scapular. But to return to St. Francis. At the time his order was sanctioned they numbered eleven brothers, of whom one only was a priest. Three years later, a sisterhood of the same order was founded by a noble lady of Assisi, named Clara, who absconded from her parents for that purpose, as Francis had also done; and A.D. 1219, ten years only after the first formation of the order, 5000 friars were present at a general chapter at Assisi; nobles and people thronged to bring them provisions, and 500 novices were admitted. On this occasion they divided the world among them for preaching; Syria and Egypt the founder reserved to himself, sending 200 into Spain to preach to the Moors; and the next year five were put to death in Morocco in a similar attempt, as has been already related. At the same chapter Friar Angelo, otherwise called Agnelli, of Pisa, was made provincial minister of England, where some account of their proceedings must now be given.

We have a very minute and particular description of their first mission to this country, from Friar Thomas

of Eccleston, one of their earliest converts, who wrote about thirty-two years after their arrival. The party, which was sent over by the charity of the monks of Fescamp, in Normandy, landed at Dover, Sept. 11, A.D. 1224. It consisted of nine persons, four in the orders of the Church, and five lay brothers. There is something to admire in the power which these rules of life had in uniting persons of different nations and tongues in the bonds of Christian brotherhood. The leader of the mission was the above-named Agnelli, and the clergymen who accompanied him were three Englishmen; one advanced in life, who had long resided in Italy, and distinguished himself as a preacher; the other two youths, eminent for zeal, obedience and patience. The laymen were four Italians and one Frenchman, Laurence of Beauvais, to whom St. Francis, in token of his great affection for him, afterwards gave his own tunic or close vest which he wore. These were shortly afterwards joined by Friar Pedro, a Spaniard, who, following the example of St. Dominic, as he is commonly reported, wore, as a mortification of the flesh, a steel cuirass for an under-waistcoat, and exhibited, as Eccleston says, many other examples of perfection. He became warden of a friary which was founded at Northampton; while Friar Thomas, another Spaniard, was fixed as warden at Cambridge.

It is clear, from the account that Eccleston gives, that these missionaries, in the first days of their sojourn, underwent many privations, and rigidly kept their rule of poverty. Having proceeded from Dover to Canterbury, they divided their company, and four, headed by the old English priest, Richard Ingleby, proceeded to London. Agnelli, with the other four, obtained the charitable use of a small chamber or cellar, beneath the house of a certain scholar, who seems to have come to study at one of the great monasteries in the former city. Here they sat from day to day, as if their rule had shut them into that narrow place, till, when the scholar came home in the evening, they were allowed

to enter the house and sit with him. They then made their fire, and prepared their repast. It consisted of oaten short-cake, sometimes accompanied with onions and thick black beer, warmed at the fire, so thick that it often required a little mixture of water to make it potable. The same hard fare was generally adopted wherever they planted themselves afterwards. The charity of the inhabitants in many of the large towns began to flow in upon them immediately; but they showed great forbearance, sometimes sending back the parcels of cloth which were brought to them, and only taking in the pittances of food on three days during the week.

When Ingleby and his companions reached London they were entertained by the black friars or Dominicans, who had already erected some buildings, for their first convent, in the neighbourhood of Lincoln's Inn; till John Travers, one of the sheriffs, gave them a house in Cornhill. Hence they removed to the place known henceforth as the Grey Friars, where Christ's Hospital now stands, taking possession of a piece of ground which John Uwin, citizen and mercer, bought for them; which, as the friars then would not hold any property as their own, he made over to the Lord Mayor and Corporation of the city, for their use. This wealthy mercer afterwards himself entered the order as a lay brother. Other rich citizens poured in their bounty; one building them a chapel at his own expense, another an infirmary, another enlarging their plot of ground, another giving them a conduit. But their patrons were not confined to one order in society. At Canterbury a noble countess, Lady Baginton, "nourished them as a mother might her children," and used her influence, which was very effectual, as such influence is still, in obtaining favour for them with peers and prelates. Nor were the clergy indifferent to them. Simon Langton, archdeacon of Canterbury, and brother of the archbishop, was a special friend to them on their arrival; two or three priests were among the first to

take the friar's frock at London; and they had still further success at Oxford, when Ingleby, with one of his original companions, proceeded to try his fortunes there.

A rich mercer and the University miller were here his first patrons; the miller conveyed a site to the corporation, as had been done in London, and was now generally adopted in other places, for a Franciscan convent. But the great accession to their cause came from a more important quarter. A number of bachelors and students of the University, who were many of them young men of good families, came to enlist themselves as novices, and the king, Henry III., greatly patronised them, and had a lodging built for himself near their convent, being moved thereto by the miraculous death in their beds of three monks of Abingdon in the same night that they had refused them admission on their first appearance. At Cambridge their success was not so rapid. The townspeople gave them a deserted Jewish synagogue close to the town-jail; where the jailers and prisoners and the poor friars had to go in and out by the same entrance, till they procured the king's leave to make another. Here they built a chapel of lath and plaster, so small and poor that it was little more than one day's work for a carpenter to erect the wooden framework. But in spite of these difficulties they persevered: no sooner had they found footing in one place, than they began to think of sending a colony to another; and before a few years had passed they had houses and convents in Norwich, Lincoln, York, Shrewsbury, Worcester, Salisbury, Southampton, and almost every other ancient city or populous town. Within thirty-two years after their landing at Dover, there were in England ninety-nine convents or stations of these friars, and the number of enrolled members was 1242. Probably, with the other orders then spread about the country, there were not fewer than between four and five thousand.

The number of enrolled members, however, does not

afford a test of the full extent of their success. We must also take into the account the congregations who came to hear their preaching, the persons of all ranks who came to confess to them, and their habit of celebrating divine service in the open air, when they went on missionary excursions to places where they had no fixed abode. We must think what must have been the strength of popular favour which could support such an army of mendicants in different quarters; for all these friars lived mainly upon the alms of the benevolent. The Dominicans, indeed, had some property in houses in London, and a few small endowments elsewhere; and this might be the case in a very few instances with the other orders; but the Franciscans, when Henry VIII. broke up their establishments, do not appear anywhere to have had rents amounting in the whole to fifty pounds a year. It was the self-renunciation and resolute poverty of these devotees which gained them their support. The contrast it afforded to the worldly wealth of the monks and dignified clergy, was regarded as a new demonstration of the power of the Gospel; and according to the mode of argument used in those days, it was asked, if it be so praiseworthy for a man to do good works with his worldly store, how much rather to give up his worldly store with himself—to offer not the fruit only, but the stem and tree?

It was, of course, however, necessary to regulate the system of begging alms; for if there had been no restraint, and every friar had been at liberty to wander to what houses he pleased, the alms would either soon have been exhausted by the contributors lacking means, or have been very irregularly supplied. This was effected by assigning districts to each convent, within which its members were to take their rounds, and generally each individual friar had his own limits prescribed; whence the name that was commonly given to them of *limitors*. When the system was established, the alms of bread, bacon, and cheese, logs of wood for their fire, and other ordinary gifts, were ready for the friar when

he called: and he who refused to give was liable to suspicion, as if he were no good Christian. It was in the nature of things that such a system should degenerate, and deep and loud had become the complaints of all classes against these lusty beggars long before the time of Wycliffe. It was commonly said that "no one could sit down to meat, high or low, but he must ask a friar or two, who when they came would play the host to themselves, and carry away bread and meat besides." Fitzralph, in his *Apology at Avignon*, accused them of "philosophising" in the chambers of the most beautiful maidens: and Eccleston says, that even so early as his time, Friar Walter of Reigate confessed that these familiarities were one of the ways by which the foul fiend vexed the order.

It appears from Chaucer, the contemporary of Wycliffe, and who was allied by marriage to his great patron, John of Gaunt, that it had become a practice of these limitors to *farm their limits*, that is, to contract with their convent to pay them a certain sum from the district assigned them, and pocket the remainder. Indeed, Chaucer's inimitable description of his friar should be studied by all who would see the manners of the age depicted to the life.

> A frere there was, a wanton and a mery,
> A limitour, a right solemnne man,
> In all the orders four is none that can
> So much of daliance and soft langàge.

Many a marriage had he made at his own cost, and well was he beloved by franklins and their dames. He had more power than the parish priest, so he said, to hear confessions, and he made it agreeable to his penitents.

> Full swetely heard he confession
> And plesant was his absolution.

Those who could afford to give, found him an easy confessor, for a man shows he is well shriven who gives money to a poor brotherhood, and since men's hearts are hard, and they will not weep for their sins,

let them give money to the poor pious instead of tears and prayers.

It was by means of the confessional and of education that their great influence was obtained. They had separate places of worship, where they administered the sacraments and heard confessions. It seems also that they might preach when they pleased in the parish churches, and would often come and order the bell to be tolled to their sermons without consulting the parish priest; and the effect of these sermons was as great as was ever produced by Whitefield or Wesley in later ages. There was an English friar of remarkable eloquence and talent, Haymo, of Feversham, who was afterwards promoted to be minister-general of the order. Being at a church in Paris about Easter, and seeing a great crowd of people hastening to receive the Holy Communion, he felt his spirit stirred within him, and having ascended the pulpit, he warned them of the danger of communicating in unrepented sin. The people were so affected, that for the next three days he had full employment in hearing their confessions.

In this instance the result seems to have been good, but it was quite otherwise when this power, which they had obtained from the pope, was used, as it soon was, to draw away the parishioners from their own parochial clergy, and in a manner to usurp the place of the latter. Martin IV., A.D. 1281, endeavoured to compromise matters by requiring one confession in the year to be made to the parish priest; but while he left the friars their ordinary privilege, this would only lead at most to a formal appearance at the stated time before the less favoured confessor. The people liked better to confess to them, being strangers, than to their own clergy, and it thus became a common complaint that the salutary part of confession, the shame of sin, was removed, and the people separated from their appointed pastors. Archbishop Fitzralph's account of this part of their operations is given in terms which mark his own piety and good sense. He says, "The only offices they seek are burials

and confessions, because these are profitable; yet every good man but themselves shrinks from hearing confessions, for it is more than enough for each to find out his own sins, without learning those of others. And thus the people are placed under shepherds who never see their flock or know their sheep, and the shame of confession is lost." And he describes the result of this in Ireland in a way too remarkable, as compared with the present state of things in that country, to be overlooked. "I think I have every year in my diocese two thousand of my flock who are involved in the general sentence of excommunication against wilful murderers, public thieves, incendiaries, and the like, of whom scarce forty in a year come to me or my penitentiaries; and yet all such persons receive the sacraments like the rest, and are absolved, or said to be absolved, and doubtless they cannot be so by any one else than the friars, since no one else absolves them."

This change in the laws of the Church was naturally followed by a change in its doctrine relative to confession. It was one of the bad symptoms during this period, that all literal interpretation of Scripture was abandoned, and strange notions of Church power, and abuses of its exercise, raised from distorted senses of the plainest texts. It was the interest of the friars to keep up the confessional; and how did they do it? Scripture speaks of confession to be made to God: *I said, I will confess my sins unto the Lord; and so thou forgavest the wickedness of my sin* (Psalm xxxii. 6). But the friar interprets it—"unto the Lord; that is, to God's vicar, or his priest; or otherwise, to the honour of God, as Joshua's words are to Achan[1]" (c. vii. 19). How different from the old doctrine of the Saxon Church! "Every day, once or twice, or oftener if we may, we must in our prayers confess our sins to God, as the prophet says, *Lord, my sin have I made known to thee,*

[1] Cardinal Joyce (a Dominican, confessor to Edward I.) *on the Psalms*, part ii. p. 55.

and mine unrighteousness I hide not from thee. I said, I will confess to thee, Lord, mine unrighteousness by myself; and thou, Lord, didst forgive the iniquity of my sin. The confession that we make to mass-priests of our sins doth us this good, that receiving from them wholesome counsels and ghostly medicines for the stains of our souls, and following their directions, we may thus do away the habit of sin. But the confession that we make to God alone doth us this good, that the oftener we remember them, God the rather forgets them; as the Lord says by the prophet, *Thy sins I remember no more* [1]."

If the influence obtained by means of education was not so great, it was perhaps more permanent, and ought to have been less objectionable. The first care of the provincial Agnelli on his arrival at Oxford, was to erect a handsome school or lecture-room at the Grey Friary, and he was eminently successful in the lecturers whom he engaged. The first of these was the famous Robert Grostête, already mentioned, afterwards bishop of Lincoln, and the most distinguished man of learning of his time. He was succeeded by Roger Wesham, a man of the most conciliating manners, as well as a man of learning, who was also raised to the bench of bishops, holding the see of Lichfield while Grostête was at Lincoln; and by Thomas of Wales, so called from the land of his birth, who became bishop of St. David's. None of these learned teachers took the order of St. Francis upon them, but their engagement with the Grey Friars shows in what esteem the new society was held in its infancy by some of the wisest and best men of the time. And the name of Friar Bacon, who was one of the first scholars of the Oxford Franciscans, must ever rescue the science and learning of the order from contempt [2].

---

[1] *Anglo-Saxon Ecclesiastical Institutes.* THORPE, vol. ii. p. 426.

[2] Roger Bacon was born at Ilchester, in Somerset, about A.D. 1215. His researches in natural philosophy were so far beyond the

It was not long before a similar school was set up at Cambridge; and lectureships were established at their convents in London, Canterbury, and other places.

But if they abused the office of confessors, their practices with their pupils in their schools were often not more wholesome. We may judge of the principles instilled into their scholars by a few specimens. The Italian missionaries seem to have used fables and familiar stories of the same kind as are still used in Italian sermons, where the friars rather act a comedy than preach. Friar Alberti had a fable to teach the juniors how to practise unquestioning obedience:

"A clown gained admission into paradise. He knocked at the door, and St. Peter opened to him. 'You may come in and see; but you must ask no questions.' He began to look about him, and the first thing he saw was a plough drawn by two oxen, one fat and one lean. The driver of the plough suffered the fat beast to go as he would, but kept goading the lean one. 'Fie upon you,' said the clown, 'why do you so?' St. Peter was at hand, and immediately threatened to expel him; but, on his entreaty, gave him a second trial. Going a little further, he saw a man carrying a long piece of timber, and trying to enter the doorway of a house; but as he bore it transversely, he was constantly forced back. He began to direct him how to carry it straight, but was interrupted a second time by the door-keeper of paradise, who dismissed him again after a more strict admonition. A third strange sight caught his attention; it was that of a woodman in a grove, who was felling the young growing trees and sparing the old trunks, which were of age to make good

---

spirit of his age, that he was suspected of practising magic. It is said that he invented a telescope. It is certain that he had discovered the error in the calculation of time, which afterwards was rectified by some Italian philosophers at Rome, two centuries ago, and led to the difference between our old style and new style. He entered the Franciscan order at Oxford, where he resided to a good old age, and was buried in the convent church there, A.D. 1293.

timber. The clown was unable to restrain himself, and began to chide the man who so misused his axe; when St. Peter caught him by the arm, expelled him from the sacred place, and shut the gate behind him."

The aim of this story was plainly to inculcate that implicit faith in the commands of a superior, which was afterwards taught with such pernicious effect by the Jesuits—to teach the pupil to do as he was bid, however unreasonable the command might appear. Such doctrine, under pretext of enforcing reverence to authority, destroys the exercise of the moral feelings; it checks due inquiry on one side, and tempts to abuse of power on the other. But it is a pretext which has often prevailed with young and earnest minds, bent upon self-sacrifice. "Do you wish to go into England?" said the warden of the convent at Paris to a young English friar of his society. He had learnt his lesson: "I do not yet know," he said, "what my own wish is to be." His meaning was, that he would form no wish till he knew his superior's will. The powers of persuasion exerted by the friars were certainly very remarkable, if we may trust Fitzralph's account. He declared that their practices to entice boys away from school or college to join their order were such, that parents now would rather consign their sons to the plough, than send them to Oxford, where the numbers had decreased, in his memory, from 30,000 to 6000 students. These numbers are probably stated on a loose calculation, but they are about the same proportions as are related to have quitted the University of Prague in the time of Jerome, the Bohemian reformer, and we must remember that, as none of our public schools were then founded, all the boys who would otherwise have gone to Eton, Westminster, and the hundred other schools founded since the Reformation, went then at an early age to Oxford or Cambridge, and mixed with older students, who came from the monastic schools, and were intended for the monastic life, or to make the Church their profession.

The mendicant orders, however, continued to increase;

and when the devout ceased to join them from motives of piety, the ambitious flocked to them as the best road to promotion. This was marked by the course which things took in England. Ralph de Maidstone, bishop of Hereford, in A.D. 1240, renounced his mitre, and retired into a Franciscan convent, persuaded by a dream which he interpreted as a divine warning. He dreamt that he was presiding in state in a synod of his clergy, when a stranger came, and sprinkling water in his face, changed him from a bishop to a beggar. The moral was, that he should go and join himself to a set of men who were in their way of life most like the poorest of the poor. Walter Mauclerc, bishop of Carlisle, and lord-treasurer, a few years later, A.D. 1246, in like manner gave himself up to the Dominicans. But in the next generation, instead of keeping to their scapulary and cord, the friars of both these orders were vying with each other in aiming at the highest stations in the Church. "If they maintain their state of poverty for the most perfect," said Wycliffe, "why forsake it for the less perfect?" Three popes, John XXI., Innocent V., and Benedict XI., were all taken from the order of Black Friars, between A.D. 1276–1303. Nicholas III., A.D. 1277, was a great patron of the Grey Brothers, for it was said that St. Francis had predicted in a vision to him when young, his future elevation. He it was who enabled them to hold property without violating the letter of their vow of poverty, by giving them the *usufruct* of property vested for them in the Holy See. This order also had its popes, of whom the first, Nicholas IV., presided four years, to their great advantage, from A.D. 1288–1292. Cardinals and bishops there were many. And what gave them further splendour in England was, that it began to be considered, as King Charles II. said of the system which nourished it, that it was a comfortable religion to die in. Princes and nobles often, as the closing scene of a life of luxury, put on the poor mendicant's dress, and gave their hearts or their whole corpses to be buried at their

convent-chapels. "What good can the dress do?" says Erasmus, in one of his colloquies, "to a dead or dying man?" "Nay," replies the other speaker, "it is well if they renounce their pride and ambition at their death-beds; for how many are there who, even in their life-time, please their imagination with the thought of the splendid funeral and procession that is to follow them to the grave?" "It would be well," the other rejoins, "if there were no other way of escaping from such pomp and pride. But why not order themselves to be rolled up in a cheap winding-sheet, and carried out by poor pall-bearers, to be buried in the churchyard with the poor? For this mode of burial seems rather to change the kind of pomp, than to avoid it altogether." These were the sentiments of a more enlightened age. At the time of which we write, Eleanor, queen of Edward I., gave her heart, and that of her son Alphonso, who died before her, to be buried with the Black Friars. Johanna, widow of the Black Prince, made the same present to the Minorites at Stamford; and her son, Richard II., was buried at another Dominican house, founded by his predecessors, at King's Langley, Herts.

Another marvellous way, by which the rich were brought in to share all the graces of poverty, without practising its privations, was by *conventual letters*, or charters of fraternisation; by which the person presented with them was entitled to all the benefit of the prayers, masses, and meritorious deeds of the order. A better expedient could not be devised to take in rich patrons, and secure their alms, than this; by which, as Wycliffe said of it, "they made property of ghostly goods, where no property may be, and professed to have no property in worldly goods, where alone property is lawful." It was probably under the persuasion of this benefit, that Edward II. gave up to the Carmelites one of his own royal residences, Beaumont palace, near Oxford, built by Henry I. for a very different purpose.

It was a singular change when the friars began to dwell in palaces and stately houses. When they first

came into England, their superiors rigidly enforced the law that they should dwell within mud walls, so that when some benefactors had built their cloisters and dormitories of stone, they even went so far as to level them with the ground, and rear them again of such materials as the poorest labourers used for their cabins. It was not exactly in this spirit that Richard Leatherhead, a grey friar from London, having been made bishop of Ossory, in A.D. 1318, pulled down three churches to get materials for his palace. But the conventual buildings, especially of the Black Friars, are described by the author of *Pierce Plowman's Creed*, a poet of Wycliffe's time, as rivalling the old monasteries in magnificence.

There is a memorable story told by Walsingham, which, if true, speaks plainly enough of the character both of the friars and their great patron at the close of their first century. The Franciscans in Italy, having amassed immense wealth, wished to hold estates like the monastic orders. To get permission for this they offered Boniface VIII., in A.D. 1299, 40,000 ducats in gold, which they lodged with a banker in Rome. The Pope dismissed them with a dubious answer, and then, having absolved the banker from his obligation to the depositors, seized the money, and told them it was not good for them to depart from their rule of poverty.

It was almost a natural consequence of their precarious mode of maintenance, that they should have sought to support their credit by miraculous revelations. The wonderful story of the five wounds of our blessed Saviour impressed upon St. Francis has been already related; but the pious blasphemy was carried still further in the following century, when a book was exhibited at the Franciscan chapter at Assisi, A.D. 1389, by Friar Bartholomew of Pisa, and approved by general consent, in which it was taught that St. Francis was made a type of Christ in his passion, that he received in a vision the same wounds, suffered the same griefs, and that the passion of Christ was renewed

in him for the salvation of souls. And it declared, that he was made by his merits the Son of God, and sanctified by the Holy Ghost, by reason of a scroll which Friar Leo saw descend from heaven and fall upon the head of St. Francis, wherein it was written, "This man is the grace of God; wholly conformable unto Christ; the image of all perfection." And again, the same book spoke of the hood of St. Francis, as conferring, on all who put it on, the same grace as holy baptism, full remission of sins, and deliverance both from their guilt and punishment. To such lengths can man be carried by misplaced reverence for his fellow-men.

Nor were the followers of Dominic a whit behind. "Christ," said they, "raised three only that were dead; St. Dominic raised three in the city of Rome. Christ, being immortal, entered twice among his disciples, the doors being shut. Dominic, yet mortal, entered by night into the church, lest he should waken his brethren. He had the angels at his service, the elements listened to his call, the devils trembled at him, and were not able to disobey him[1]." To which must be added what one fain would not write, "Christ prayed once in vain, Dominic never prayed in vain."

It may be asked, how so many wise and learned men, as the popes often were, should have given authority to such gross inventions. It must be remembered that the papal power itself could have only been secure by keeping its hold upon public opinion; and, while the current of opinion ran strongly in favour of the mendicants, it would scarcely have been safe to oppose them. Some of them had excited seditions and civil war in Italy; and at Paris there was a sect of Minorites who set out for sale at the church of Notre Dame, a book impiously called *The Everlasting Gospel*, which raised a great commotion in that city. This book contained a prophecy that the successors of St. Peter

[1] Lewis's *Life of Pecock*.

should shortly be put down, and a new power be raised in the Church, under the patronage of St. John, which should utterly destroy the adherents of the see of Rome. This power was to stand, as might be expected, in the support of the friars, who were to be the only clergy left alive under the new system. Pope Alexander IV. ordered this book to be burnt by the executioner in A.D. 1256; but the friars gave him so much trouble, that he declared "he would rather have one of the most powerful kings in Christendom for an enemy, than a disciple of Dominic or Francis." A decision of John XXII., A.D. 1316, revoking in some measure the permission of Nicholas III. to hold property, and condemning those who should say that Christ and his apostles had nothing of their own, gave great offence, and a section of Franciscans from this time rejected the pope, and lurked about Italy for a century and a half, holding strange doctrines, and practising, as their enemies asserted, unheard-of and unnatural rites. They were called Fraticelli, and were cruelly persecuted[1].

It is remarkable that in the rebellion of the boors in England in the following century, shortly before the death of Wycliffe, the same design was entertained of leaving no clergy except the friars; and it is a very suspicious circumstance against them, as having been the exciters of that insurrection. When Jack Straw was brought to execution in London, A.D. 1381, the lord mayor begged him to make a full confession of the designs of Wat Tyler and his accomplices, promising him a good number of masses for his soul, if he complied. He confessed, among other things, that after destroying all the nobility and gentry, they meant to have killed the king, and all the clergy who had either land or fee, the bishops, monks, canons, and rectors of churches. "None but the begging friars," said he,

---

1 Some curious particulars of this persecution may be seen in a small book published in Germany, and entitled *Vier Documenten ausden Römischen Archiven.* Leipsig, 1843.

"should have been left upon the face of the earth; and they would have been enough to do all the duties of the churches[1]." This was not a random calculation, if, as Wycliffe says in one of his tracts, there were then "many thousands" of these friars. He calculates their collections in alms as amounting to not less than 60,000 marks, which, as ten marks a year was then sufficient for the maintenance of a chantry-priest, would support at least six thousand friars. Among these there were, doubtless, many ignorant laymen, but the notion of consigning all ministerial duties to the friars was natural enough at a time when they had already, as Fitzralph and Wycliffe alike bear witness, almost driven the rectors and curates from the discharge of their office.

Another remarkable doctrine of the friars is the rather to be noted in this place, as it seems to have arisen first in England. It was recorded at a council in London, A.D. 1328, that St. Andrew had appointed a festival in honour of the *Immaculate Conception* of the Virgin, which this council accordingly ordained to be observed in the province of Canterbury. It was asserted that the Blessed Virgin "was free from original sin through sanctifying grace which God infused into her at the time when the soul was united with the body[2]." And this assertion was for three centuries a fruitful source of altercation in the Church, the Franciscans affirming and the Dominicans denying the doctrine, and

---

[1] WALSINGHAM, p. 265. It is remarkable that Collier, where he relates this confession, sets down the words "to destroy the monks, canons, and rectors, and not to spare any of the clergy, excepting the friars mendicant, *and some poor priests to officiate.*" Whereas Walsingham says nothing whatever of these "poor priests," but precisely what the reader will find in the text. Did Collier mean to hint that Wycliffe's "poor priests" had made common cause with the friars, who were their bitterest enemies? Walsingham elsewhere tries to insinuate this. But Jack Straw's confession is alone enough to determine this question.

[2] LAMBERTINI (Benedict XIV.) *de Festis*, p. 460.

the popes in vain attempting to mediate between them. Once it was adopted by the Council of Basil, A.D. 1439; but this council not having had at that time the papal sanction, its decree is not received, and the question is not yet settled, though a great living authority has written in favour of it [1], expressing a hope that it will yet be affirmed by the Church.

And yet the followers of Dominic were hardly behind the votaries of Francis in their exaltation of Mary. One of his biographers recorded that she was present when St. Dominic was celebrating the Lord's supper; that she took the sacrament at his hands, and helped him afterwards to unrobe. He calls Dominic the spouse of the Holy Virgin, and proceeds to describe the way in which he himself also had been in like manner favoured by her, and presented with a ring and a chain of her hair [2]. Who can wonder, and who can doubt, that in such times saints and angels, images and pilgrimages, were in equal honour with the Saviour, and other names advanced above the holiest one? The adoration of the Virgin supplies one of the earliest instances of harmonious cadence in English poetry:—

> Mary, mother, well thee be,
> Mary, maiden, think on me;
> Maiden and mother was never none
> Together, lady, save thee alone.

As all the services, except the sermon, were in Latin, they had a sort of poetical description of the Old and New Testament history, which was recited or acted on Sundays and holydays before the people. But such was the strange confusion of all knowledge, that one of these rhyming stories introduces a legend of a bishop called Antiochus, at the time of the Annunciation,

---

[1] Cardinal Lambruschini on *the Immaculate Conception.*

[2] Alanus de Rupe, quoted with just censure by the Bollandisti, 4th of August, p. 361.

before our Saviour's birth[1]. These histories were called Miracles, or Miracle Plays, and were represented in churches, sometimes by means of puppets, sometimes by the clergy themselves dressed up in character. It was a rude device adapted to a rude age, and perhaps we ought not to censure any attempt, however imperfect, to represent the sacred history to the minds of the people. But these exhibitions were usually conducted by the mendicant orders, and considering their wandering habits, it must have tended to give them very much of the character of roving players or minstrels. This was done especially at Easter, when the subject was the awful mystery of the resurrection of Christ; and these actors were not afraid to make an idle mock-representation of the angels at the sepulchre, the soldiers, and the women. About Christmas they kept the festival of the Star, as it was called; and not only the wise men from the East were represented, but a manger and oxen were brought into the church. In like manner Balaam's history was made a piece of profane drollery, and this interlude was called the Festival of the Ass. This was a custom to be matched in later times in Italy and Spain, where it used to be a practice on St. Mark's day to bring a bull, to which they had administered a sleeping potion, into their churches to hear mass. Pope Clement VIII., about A.D. 1600, forbade it in his own territories; but it prevailed in the last century in the provinces of the peninsula. It is of such profanations that a Benedictine of that country speaks, when he applies to them the text: *Behold, I will spread dung upon your faces, even the dung of your solemn feasts; and one shall take you away with it* (Malachi ii. 3). They prevailed against the wishes of Bishop Grostête and William of Wykeham, who laboured to suppress them; and against the strongest condemnation expressed by other clergymen,

[1] See two specimens of these plays given at length in STEPHENS's *Supplement*, i. 139. See also WARTON's *English Poetry*, ii. 82.

such as William de Wadington, a poet of this period, who spoke his mind in Norman-French verse: "To make such assemblies of fools in the streets and churchyards,—to abuse the church-vestments, consecrated to other purposes, in these follies,—who can believe such things to be done, as it is pretended, for the honour of God? Verily it is nothing else but a devil's game, and an act of sacrilege, and the spectators share the crime[1]."

More harmless in its character was the festival of the boy-bishop on Innocents' day, when a child from the choir was dressed up in vestments like a bishop, and acted his part for the day as a grave father of the Church. Something of this kind appears to have been kept up after the Reformation, when we find good Dean Colet providing for the little pageant at his foundation of St. Paul's school, and his friend Erasmus composing a speech to be delivered by the boy-bishop. In the next age the younger singers of the choir were taken to play in court-masques and interludes, where, perhaps, their talents for mimicry were not better employed[2]. We need not harshly condemn what such men as Dean Colet and Erasmus thought fit to be tolerated, and what was but a Christmas-holyday game at worst. Of a very different character were those base representations and corrupt scenes enacted by their elders, and which were so bound up with the religion of the party opposed to reformation, that they were revived again in London in the days of Queen Mary.

Still worse was it when the festival of a saint's trans-

---

[1] "E juz del diable pur verité," &c. PRICE on WARTON'S *Hist. of Poetry*, vol. ii. p. 69.

[2] Ben Jonson's pretty lines on the death of Salathiel Pavey, a child of the Queen's chapel, speak as if he might have acted boy-bishop:—

> He did act, what now we moan,
> Old men so duly,
> That the three sisters thought him one,
> He played so truly, &c.

lation came round, and crowds of votaries came thronging to the holy place. But what the scenes were at such places as were most celebrated, we may judge by the only modern parallel in any English settlement, a camp-meeting in the woods of North America. This again might be proved by the coarse but faithful description left us of the Canterbury pilgrimage by Chaucer. What was the character of these scenes at a later date in Spain? "The pen cannot enter upon it," says our Benedictine, "without horror. No man, who has ever been present at these meetings, will hesitate to bear witness to the innumerable disorders which are committed there; vice scarcely disguises itself with the cloak of piety; dissoluteness triumphs in its proper garb and form. And no wonder; for it is the very end for which they go. With very few exceptions, it may be said that the most innocent intention, with which any appear at these meetings, is to see and to be seen." He goes on to speak of the excesses which follow by day and night, and ends with the significant proverb, "No great artillery is needed to batter down walls which are ready to fall with the slightest breath of wind[1]."

One other of the practices of the friars is yet to be mentioned. When indulgences came to be sold, the pope made them a part of his ordinary revenue, and according to the usual way in those, and even in much later times, of farming the revenue, he let them out usually to the Dominican friars. Here again we must refer to Chaucer for the best and most authentic description of the "gentle pardoner."

> His wallet lay before him in his lap,
> Brimful of pardon, come from Rome all hot.

He had reliques too, as well as pardons, our Lady's veil, and part of the sail of St. Peter's ship.

> And thus with fained flattering and gapes[2],
> He made the parson, and the peple, his apes.

---

[1] *Feyjoo, Theatr. Crit.*, vol. vi. p. 39.

[2] Tricks.

And yet he was a noble ecclesiastic, and sang an offertory better than the best.

Popular poetry, always influential, is especially so in a rude age, and these poems, and others, such as the *Vision of Piers Plowman*, and the *Plowman's Crede*, at once indicated and promoted the desire after better things. But Chaucer, with the love of virtue inseparable from a true poet, was not content to lash prevailing vices; he would also hold up ideal excellence to view; and his beautiful description of a parish priest, familiar to us all in the modern paraphrase of Dryden, has sometimes been thought to be intended for Wycliffe himself; certainly it represents such a pastor as all priests may emulate, and all parishes desire to see.

> A parish priest was of the pilgrim train,
> An awful, rev'rend, and religious man.
> His eyes diffused a venerable grace,
> And charity itself was in his face.
> Rich was his soul, though his attire was poor,
> (As God had clothed his own Ambassador,)
> For such on earth his bless'd Redeemer bore [1].

[1] See the motto of Chap. II.

CHAPTER VIII.

WYCLIFFE'S TRANSLATION OF THE BIBLE. HIS DENIAL OF TRANSUBSTANTIATION. HIS DEATH.

> O book, infinite sweetness, let my heart
> Suck every letter, and a honey gain,
> Precious for any grief, in any pain,
> To clear the heart, and mollify all pain.
> G. HERBERT, *of Holy Scripture.*

AFTER the second citation of Wycliffe, when he appeared before the convocation at Lambeth, A.D. 1378, an interval of three years seems to have occurred without any further proceedings against him; but it was a momentous period in the history of his life. We have seen that the papal schism, to which it is probable that he owed the suspension of these proceedings, had immediately become a fruitful topic of his censure. But if his former conduct was calculated to bring him into disrepute with the leaders of the Church, still more were those steps on which he now adventured. These were the translation of the Bible into English, and the denial of the doctrine of transubstantiation.

The English people had as yet no entire version of the Scriptures in their own language. There were, indeed, some parts of the sacred volume translated at different times, which were probably in few hands; and it is not easy to say how far the old Anglo-Saxon translations might still have been understood[1]. But these were not for the people, and there was no provision that it should be read in churches. The rulers of the Church had neglected their duty, and any man who should undertake to supply the want, would undertake an

[1] See the quotation from Sir Thomas More in SOUTHEY'S *Book of the Church*, cxi. p. 204, 4th edit.

invidious task,—more especially Wycliffe, who was already embarked in avowed hostility to them. It happened as might have been expected; rather than acknowledge their own neglect, the clergy found out that the people had no right to the word of God, and that they had done their duty in withholding it—thus perverting and bringing into contempt another truth; for though the Gospel is committed to the ministry of the Church, it is that they may keep it only to teach it to the flock of Christ, not withhold or suppress the sacred deposit.

Wycliffe's translation was made not from the original Hebrew and Greek, but from the Latin; and he was assisted in it, as he says in his preface, by some of his friends, particularly Dr. Nicholas Hereford, one of the most learned of them. Happy man, and true patriot, who amidst reproach and trouble could refresh his own soul from the fountains of eternal life which he was pouring forth upon his country! The Bible thus translated was first put forth in the year 1380, and the price of it in the year 1429 is known to have been 2*l.* 16*s.* 8*d.*, which in our money would be ten or twelve times as much,—a vast price; for printing was not yet in use, and the cost of transcribing was very great. But it was soon in great request, and copies multiplied amazingly; for it seems the people were of Wycliffe's own opinion, as expressed in his preface, "that Christian men and women, old and young, should study fast in the New Testament,—should cleave to the study of it,—and that no simple man of wit, no man of small knowledge, should be afraid unmeasurably to study in the text of holy writ."

This translation was not immediately denounced or put down by authority; for when an attempt to suppress it by act of parliament was made about four years later, John of Gaunt interfered, and declared that "all other nations had the Bible in their own language, and the English should not be the dregs of all men;'—a declaration which, being made after Wycliffe's death, may perhaps mark some conscientious regret at

his abandonment of the Reformer, as we shall see, shortly before his death, on account of his opinions concerning the holy sacrament of the Lord's supper. So the attempt for the present miscarried; and the translation was first condemned by Archbishop Arundel's influence in convocation, A.D. 1408[1]. The grounds on which the churchmen of those days objected to the translation were not, indeed, that it is wrong in itself for people to read the Bible, but that it is wrong for unauthorised persons to put out their versions of it. For, on another occasion, this same Archbishop Arundel, in preaching the funeral sermon of Anne of Bohemia, queen of Richard II., highly extolled her for having the four Gospels in English, and for sending them to him for his inspection and approval. If this was the only objection, however, they would have best proved it by issuing an authorised version to be read in churches. The hermit of Hampole had made a translation of the Psalms, with an English commentary, a few years before, which is so like Wycliffe's version, that probably Wycliffe had seen it. And another version of the whole Bible appeared about the same time with Wycliffe's, by John of Trevisa, a Cornishman, chaplain to Lord Berkeley, a young baron who seems to have had a taste for better things than the usual occupations of his age. The only copy of this version known to have existed in this country was destroyed by fire; but other writings of John of Trevisa, which remain, show that he was a man of principles near akin to Wycliffe's, and opposed, on the same grounds, to the temporal power of popes and prelates[2].

---

[1] Wycliffe's Bible was never condemned by act of parliament. The act 2 Henry V. c. vii., which is sometimes said to have condemned it, contains no such clause.

[2] It is singular that Foxe makes no mention of Wycliffe's version of the Bible, and Collier speaks as if he had not seen it. A specimen of HAMPOLE'S *Psalter*, and WYCLIFFE'S *Translation of the Book of Job*, will be found in the Appendix to this volume, C.

It is observable, however, that Wycliffe gave no countenance to the modern sectarian way of sending every private man to the Bible to make out a creed for himself. He was only careful to warn his hearers against receiving new articles of belief on the pope's warrant; but his rule of faith was the same with that of Ridley, as learnt from Vincent of Lerins, and other fathers of the primitive Church. His words are these:—

"As belief is the ground of all other virtues, it is the aim of the fiend to mar men in their troth (in what they should believe); and he begins by this, that whatever your prelate saith is the belief of holy Church; or whatever the pope saith is true and stable, and that all men should stand by it as by their belief; or whomever he canonises, assoils, or damns, he is so treated of God; as if God must confirm all that the pope does, in virtue of Christ's behest to Peter.

"The cause of these errors, by which the old belief is openly suspended, and a new belief grows in its place, as antichrist would have it, is that men know not their belief, and therefore trust in falseness, and take strange truths as the belief of the whole Church. The ground against the errors is, to be established in Christ's law, and to know what His Church is, and what is the belief of His Church. What is the subject of belief? It is hidden truth; which God tells us in His law. It is declared enough in the common creed of Christian men. If thou wilt examine faith, whether it be the true faith of Christ's Church, look whether it is grounded on any article of the creed; if it be not grounded, take it not as belief.

"Shame upon this venom, that if the pope determine thus, then it is common belief, that each man ought to trow. For thus two popes might make two creeds, and the creed of the Church should hang on the pope; and he must needs be saved, however he may live, for he would be a God on earth. This is the friars' cry, and they blind the people with it. But ask these friars, whether it is grounded on the common belief of the

Church; and if they fail in this point, suspect them for fiend's children."

To this good catholic doctrine he adds, that, in his opinion, the creeds themselves contain some things less necessary than others, and that a plain Christian may be saved without being able to dispute upon them all.

"Right belief teaches what must needs be God's truth, and that thou shouldest trust in His will. Men must trow that God is, and love Him and their neighbour. In the general creed are contained many truths that we need not to dispute, but may leave them as unpertinent (unnecessary), as in the creed of Athanasius and of the Church; but it is an honest ordinance, and God would have us take it. Let each man trow that God is better than any other thing, and in generalty believe all truths that God will have him believe.

"We need not muse on special questions about truths that God will hide. God will hide from thee whether thou shalt be saved or damned; but He would have thee trow, that if thou believe in Him to the death, then thou shalt be with Him in bliss of heaven without end. And thus God would have hidden from thee the hour and time when thou shalt die, and the day of the last doom, for God would have thee ever waking. God would have thee leave musing on doubts that he would hide; as of our Lady, and St. John, and other saints that fools prate of, and bring in as matters of belief, for they hope to win thereby [1]. Since God made all things in measure, we should hold us in His bounds, and trow truths that He has ordained and taught Christian men to trow [2]."

---

[1] This evidently alludes to such legendary tales as those of Friar Woodford, mentioned before, and the assumption of the Blessed Virgin, which he fairly owns "is not in Scripture!" It seems that as early as the time of St. Augustine, there was an apocryphal story that St. John was not dead, but lay asleep in his grave, founded on the words in his Gospel, ch. xxi. 22, 23.

[2] *Homily on St. Matt.*, xxiii. M.S.

In the mean time Wycliffe continued to teach the students who came to him, in right of his degree as doctor of theology. There was no want of pupils to learn his tenets; and the Oxford bachelors and scholars were ready to enlist themselves as his disciples. It seems to have been about this time that he adopted with them the same plan which had been tried three centuries earlier by the unfortunate Berenger in France, who had engaged and paid poor scholars to go about and preach his doctrine of the Lord's supper[1]. In like manner, Wycliffe's "Poor Priests," as they were called, travelled about to different towns, preaching very earnestly the same doctrines for which their master had been accused, and, as is wont to happen where persecution has stirred up a spirit of resistance, often going beyond their master.

Perhaps the very steps that were taken to suppress his opinions might turn out to the furtherance of them. For when his friends were banished, as we shall shortly see, from Oxford, they travelled on foot all England over, and preached wherever they could, thus adopting the same system of itinerancy already practised by the mendicant orders: so that another set of preachers thus arose, equally opposed to the generality of the clergy. They preached wherever they could find an audience, in town or country; the market-crosses and stone pulpits, which were then standing in the most populous places of concourse, were their favourite places of harangue; and by calling themselves poor priests, walking barefoot, and wearing long russet gowns, they seemed to aim to recommend their cause to the poorer part of the people, to whose habits they so much conformed.

It is not true that Wycliffe took upon him to ordain priests; but he said that the mission of a priest to preach the Gospel is the same as that of a bishop, and

[1] MALMSBURY, *Hist.*, b. iii. § 284.

therefore he maintained that priests might preach everywhere without license from bishops. He, in fact, did no more, when he employed any priests who were willing to preach his doctrine without license from the bishops, than the friars already did under the authority of the pope. They too were authorised to enter into all parishes and churches; they too preached sometimes in the open air, and were not accountable to the priest or bishop of the parish or diocese which they thus invaded. And that which these fraternities did under papal sanction, in order to preach up papal indulgences, and as he believed, to mislead the people, Wycliffe boldly resolved that any priest might do, on his own authority as the minister of Christ, in order to preach the Gospel. And if it must be confessed that they did not always confine themselves to such topics as became them,—for they excited men's minds against many things which they had been taught to reverence, and thus sometimes addressed the passions of their audience,—yet on the whole they preached Christ crucified, and that name was as the sound of waters in the wilderness, or as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.

The working of this system may be judged of by a few examples. We have an account of William Swinderley selecting two millstones for a pulpit in the High-street of Leicester, and declaring that he could and would preach there in spite of the bishop. They would preach in churches, however, when they could gain permission; and they made use of the chantries and free chapels, many of which were situated in lonely places, and seem to have been but little frequented. And we often find that knights and gentlemen would give notice of their preaching, and bring their armed retainers to protect them from molestation. Soon after Wycliffe's death, John Fox, mayor of Northampton, A.D. 1392, sent to hire preachers from Oxford to preach in the churchyard in the market-place during Lent, at a stone cross erected there, to which probably the peni-

tents at that season resorted to pray or perform their penances[1].

It is most likely that the Lollard preachers were employed in explaining the better doctrine of absolution as taught by Wycliffe, and as he had learnt it from the study of St. Jerome[2]; but the vicar of All Saints, *Sir John* Plomme, seems to have had no vote in the matter. It was worse when, on Sunday, as the same vicar, after the offertory, was going to the altar to sing his mass, the mayor followed and held him by his vestment, till he had made him promise to cease while the congregation heard a sermon from the strange preacher; and in the afternoon Richard Stormworth, a woolstapler, zealous for the other side, made an uproar which drowned the voice of reformation.

Wycliffe himself was not certainly disposed to leave too much to Church governors. He put forth a tract about this time, in which he plainly avowed that he

---

[1] BRIDGES' *Hist. of Northants*, i. 430.

[2] "Right as priests of the old law had power and cunning (knowledge) to tell who were leprous, and who were clean of leprosy, by signs that God taught them; so in the new law God taught His priests by what spiritual signs they should know ghostly leprosy, and by what signs they should say, This leprosy is forgiven, if the man who confesses to the priest say the truth of himself. And this is Jerome's sentence upon Christ's word to Peter." (S. JEROME, *Comm. on St. Matthew*, b. iii. c. 16.) Again, he says, there is great danger in men's trusting in penances imposed by the priest, not perceiving how impossible it is for any priest "to tax evenly the pain after the sin. No man in earth," he says, "nor angel in heaven, unless God tell him specially, can tax such a penance."—*Schism of the Popes.* MS.

Mr. Le Bas, following Dr. Vaughan, says that Wycliffe "positively denied the necessity of confessing to a priest." *L. of Wyclif*, p. 201. On the contrary, he in this tract says, "this sacrament is needful to sinful men; but not so needful as confession made to God." He says, "it doth men good by shame and dread of their shrift, and draweth them from many sins:" and his determination is wise and just, "that Peter's keys should not perish, but be furbished and cleansed of the rust of heresy, and the blasphemy of confessors be laid down."

thought it contrary to God's law for bishops or clerks to possess lands or lordships[1]. This notion he founded upon the texts in the New Testament in which our Lord reproves his disciples for contending which should be the greatest (Matt. xx. 25, 26); and he argued, that God, in the old law, forbade priests to have any heritage among the people (Numb. xviii. 20); therefore they ought to live on offerings and tithes, which he calls "God's rents;" and patrons who had endowed the Church with lands were guilty of an offence against this divine prohibition.

The argument was unsound, and rested on an imperfect knowledge of Scripture. The Levites, under the old law, had a public endowment of lands as well as tithes; their forty-eight cities had each a suburb or district assigned round them for gardens, and pasture for their flocks, of the size of an ordinary parish, or manor (Numb. xxxv. 4, 5); and it is plain that the priests had a portion of their maintenance from these fields of the suburbs (2 Chron. xxxi. 19). Religious persons were allowed and encouraged to devote a part of their lands to the service of God, and the use of the priests (Lev. xxvii. 16–21). As to lordships, David, and other religious princes, had always some of the chief priests for their ministers of state; and it would not be easy to find a good reason why Christian kings should not entrust a share of the public counsels to the bishops, whom the English constitution has ever regarded as one of the three estates of the realm. In this, and some other points, Wycliffe was carried by his zeal beyond the bounds of truth and soberness.

We must, however, remember that in this time there was enough to provoke extreme opinions, in the unsuitable occupations which many bishops and clerks pursued as a means of preferment, as well as in the unpriestly characters which they assumed after their elevation. He speaks of several who gained benefices

[1] *Tract on Divine Dominion.* MS. WALSINGHAM, p. 208.

by becoming house-stewards to noblemen, "kitchen-clerks or penny-clerks (accountants), or wise in building castles, or other worldly doings, although they cannot well read their psalter[1]." And when they had gained higher preferments, they used their lordships like other lords, and often were employed on embassies abroad, or in military enterprises within and without the realm, while they left their episcopal duties to a suffragan. Shortly after Wycliffe's death, there was more than one bishop engaged at the head of troops in the border wars, to which Shakspeare alludes in speaking of Hotspur:—

> He doth fill fields with harness in the realm,
> Lead ancient lords *and reverend bishops* on
> To bloody battles and to bruising arms.

But a more distinguished martial prelate was one whose exploits he lived to witness, Henry Spencer, bishop of Norwich, Walsingham's model of perfection in all qualities befitting a father of the Church. He had, by great vigour and presence of mind, put down the insurgents of Norfolk in Wat Tyler's rebellion, and executed some number of them without the king's warrant. Shortly afterwards, A.D. 1383, he levied troops, and led what was called a crusade against the French and Flemings, to assert the cause of Urban VI. against his French rival, Clement. After a series of bloody actions and sieges at Graveline, Dunkirk, and other towns in the Low Countries, he returned with the reputation of great personal courage, but with no permanent benefit to the cause of the Italian pontiff. The Pope had sent an unbounded grant of indulgences to all who should

---

[1] *Why Poor Priests have no Benefices.* MS. T. Warton thinks that Wycliffe here alludes to William of Wykeham, the architect of Windsor Castle. But when all the bishops and barons dwelt in castles, there is no need to suppose that he was the only castle-builder among the clergy. And Wycliffe would hardly have meant to reproach the memory of Edward III., the author of Wykeham's preferment, by whose favour he himself had been preferred to the prebend of Worcester and rectory of Lutterworth.

follow this mitred champion to the war; and not only knights, squires, and yeomen archers flocked to his standard, under this license to plunder and destroy without remorse, but also many rectors and vicars of parish churches, monks and canons regular, and friars, who seem to have thought it as lawful to live by robbery as by alms. "Those priests who live by alms and tithes," says Friar Capgrave, in speaking of this prelate, "are forbidden to meddle with battles; for they have nothing in common with princes. But those who have castles, and such kind of royalties from princes, may with full license be present in battles, not only against Paynims and Saracens, but also against false Christians[1]." If such was the doctrine of the time, we may see that Wycliffe had some reason to desire the abolition of their temporal lordships. "Take heed," he said to his hearers[2], "of the ministries of these prelates. They give leave to priests, to monks, and friars, to travail in their cause, although they slay men. Ah! since King David, that was so just a man, was forbidden to make the temple, but Solomon, that loved peace, was ordained of God to make it, how much less should popes and priests shed blood in their own cause! Surely it seems that since they have forsaken patience and charity, God forsaketh them."

There was one class of persons, however, to whom Wycliffe was still more opposed than "the proud prancing prelates," as John Foxe delights to call them. These were the mendicant friars, with whom he kept no terms of civility, gave them no quarter, but pursued them with all the invective which the Latin of the schools, or the plain English of the people, could furnish. They were "Iscariot's children, betraying Christ and the truth of the Gospel for money, comforting men in sin and lust;" "thieves stolen into the Church;" "hypocrites, and worse heretics than the Jews;" "adversaries of Christ, and disciples of Satan." He ex-

[1] *Angl. Sacra*, ii. p. 361. [2] *Schism of the Popes*. MS.

poses without mercy the part they had taken in Bishop Spencer's crusade, the treasures they had raised from the king's liege subjects for this mad expedition, more than the king could raise for himself or his own land; the counsel that they had given to many, who, misled by a false piety, had gone and died in the wars, who, he says, were "Antichrist's martyrs;" and he speaks with bitter contempt of their superstitious regard for their "rotten habit," their trade in letters of fraternity, the unscriptural character of their rule of begging, and their "stealing of children," as he calls it, that is, their seducing of boys of tender age, as before mentioned, to take their order upon them. He speaks of their many great churches and costly houses, and complains that in many places the old parish churches were falling by neglect, while all this expense was lavished upon "Caim's castles." He thus designated their convents, taking the first letters of the titles given to the four orders, Carmelites, Austin friars, Jacobins[1], and Minorites, to spell the name of the first-born murderer. But William Woodford, a Minorite, complained, fairly enough, that he had misspelt the name, and made it *Caim*, instead of *Cain*, to include the disciples of Francis.

The friars, on the other hand, were not slow to retaliate. It was chiefly by their agency that some of Wycliffe's disciples seem to have been imprisoned during his lifetime. They disputed against his doctrines, particularly in defence of transubstantiation, which he had now begun to oppose. And as he had argued that the common religion taught by the Gospel, coming immediately from Christ, was infinitely more perfect than the private rules of Benedict, or Dominic, or Francis, they thought it concerned their credit to maintain the contrary. The arguments which they

[1] The Dominicans, so called from their first house, the hospital of St. James in Paris; which may truly be said to have been a Cain's castle, a dwelling of murderers, when it was made the place of meeting for Robespierre and his club in the French Revolution.

brought forward are a curious specimen of the received opinions of those days. "The same mode of reasoning," said Friar Woodford, "would prove the soul of the traitor Judas to be more perfect than the human nature of our Lord; for the soul of the traitor was created immediately by God, the humanity of our Lord was born from the blessed Virgin; or that the coats of skins which the Almighty made for our first parents were more perfect than silk and scarlet, and cloth of gold." Not being quite satisfied, however, with these base comparisons, he goes on to shift his ground, and says boldly, that God is much more the author of these private rules than either Benedict, or Dominic, or Francis; "for the three principal mandates and counsels of the Gospel are poverty without property, chaste single life, and obedience to the counsels of a superior," which were the foundation of most rules of private religion. This could hardly satisfy; he therefore gets clear of Scripture as soon as he can, and takes up his position in the stronghold of tradition, which he evidently thinks impregnable. "The common Christian religion," he says, "contains many traditions, which are not in holy Scripture; and yet these traditions are good and perfect; as, for instance, the use of the sign of the cross, and the observance of the Lord's day. We read in Scripture of the observance of the Jewish Sabbath, and nothing is plainly set down of the change of the solemnity to the Lord's day. This is an apostolical tradition, not written in Scripture." There was no great harm in this; we learn the apostles' practice from Scripture (Acts xx. 7; 1 Cor. xvi. 2; Rev. i. 10); and therefore believe the tradition of the early Church, which says it was their rule. What next? "Likewise, the tradition of observing the festival of the assumption of the glorious Virgin is not in Scripture; but, like many other festivals, is rightly observed by the community of all Catholics." As if a tradition confirming a practice authorised by the apostles, and a tradition of which the Church never heard for the first eight hundred years,

stood on the same footing[1]. He next mentions the Lent-fast, and the Ember-weeks; but the first of these is, as all Christians know, founded on imitation of our Lord in the Gospels, the other an imitation of the Jewish Church (Zech. viii. 19); both, therefore, in different ways, sanctioned by Scripture. What was commonly done by the Church at large, however, would not make out a case for the friar. He therefore goes on: "By the same rule, many religious persons of private religions observe many private traditions, *which are not found perfectly set down to the very letter in holy Scripture.*" Well said:—for what were they? "St. Peter the apostle observed the tradition of rising and weeping every night at the crowing of the cock; which none of the other apostles did. St. James also observed many traditions not written in holy Scripture, and different from those of the other apostles and other Catholics, as you may read in his life;"—probably some legend of Compostella. "St. Bartholomew bent his knees a hundred times night and day—a tradition not written in Scripture," says the friar, "nor observed by the other apostles. The monks and nuns, who were instituted by the apostles, did the like, observing many traditions of their own, by order of the apostles." These reasons the learned Woodford delivered in a public disputation against Wycliffe at Oxford, more to his own satisfaction, probably, than that of his hearers[2]. For it is certain that mendicancy never recovered effectually from the homethrusts of the patriarch of Reformation.

It would be a waste of the reader's time to offer

---

[1] In the time of the Venerable Bede, the Scottish Abbot Adamnan of Iona wrote a description of the Holy Land from the narrative of Arewolf, a French bishop. In this book he speaks of the blessed Virgin's sepulchre as situated in a church in the Valley of Jehosaphat. The Church then believed that she had died and was buried, like other saints. This was in A.D. 704. The story of her being raised again was of later date.

[2] BROWN'S *Fasciculus*, i. 218, 219.

him any detail of the sterner stuff which Wycliffe brought against such adversaries. It is not likely such adversaries will arise again to require arguments to put them down. What we would rather wish to know is, by what secret Wycliffe obtained such influence among the people of England,—how his doctrines were so widely extended at home, that every teacher of the reformed party tried to imitate him in all things, and for the next half-century they were equally popular in Germany. We have left to us a great number of his tracts, preserved by his followers in the midst of persecution, and when copies of them were eagerly sought to be destroyed. They seem fairly to represent to us the character of his addresses from the pulpit, often mixed with strong reproof of the abuses of the time, but plainly directing the hope and faith of Christians to that central truth which can alone sustain the soul. While every quarter of the land was full of papal privileges, purchased indulgences, charters, bulls, and letters of the monkish and mendicant fraternities, we may imagine with what force such words as these must have rung in the people's ears:—

"Look well to the CHARTER OF HEAVEN! Every wise man, that claims a heritage, or asks a *great pardon*, must keep with busy pains, and often think of the charter of his challenge. Therefore, all and each of you, keep fast the charter of heaven, and study well the wit and meaning of that *bull;* for the *pardon* thereof shall endure for ever.

"Do you ask what is the charter of this heritage, and the bull of this everlasting pardon? It is the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, written with all the might of the virtue of God. The parchment of this heavenly charter is neither of sheep nor of calf; but it is the holy and blessed skin of our Lord, the Lamb that was never spotted with wem or stain of sin. And never was there skin of sheep or calf so sore and hard-strained upon the tenter or harrow of any parchment-maker, as was this blessed body and skin of our Lord, for our

love, strained and drawn upon the gibbet of the cross[1]. And no man ever heard from the beginning of the world, nor ever shall hear, that writer ever wrote with such hard and hideous pens, so bitterly, so sorely, and so deeply, as the accursed Jews wrote upon the blessed body of our Lord, with hard nails, sharp spear, and sore pricking thorns. They pierced his hands and feet with hard nails. They opened his heart with a sharp spear. They pressed upon his head a crown of pricking thorns. These wounds upon his blessed body are the letters in which our charter was written, by which we may claim our heritage, if we read them aright. Thereon is written wailing and sorrow for our sins; for the which, that they might be healed and washed away, Christ, God and man, must endure such hard and painful wounds. But thereon is written joy and singing to all those that perfectly forsake their sins.

"The *laces* that hold the seal to this charter are these two. First, the behest or promise of God, that at what day or hour a sinful man leaveth his sin, and heartily, with bitter sorrow, turns to him, he will receive him to his mercy. The second is, the full trust that we have, that God may not lie nor be false of his behest. And hereon hangeth surely our trust of our heritage.

"The *seal* of our charter is sealed with the blood of the Lord Christ, taken of the drops that he swate in his agony. Marry, more craftily and marvellously is it sealed than ever any bee, by craft of kind, gathereth the wax from flowers of the field. The *print* of this

[1] The frequency of sights of executions and mortal suffering seems to have enabled pious persons of the times of Wycliffe to realise more than we can the bodily anguish of the cross. Thus the devout Richard of Hampole, a little before Wycliffe, in his *Meditations on the Passion:* "Sweet Jesu, methinketh I see thy body on the rood all bleeding and strained, that the joints twine (part asunder); . . . thy skin all-to drawn so broad, that it is marvel it is whole; . . . thy body is *strained as a parchment-skin on the harrow,*" &c.—See *British Magazine*, April, 1834, p. 423.

seal is the shape of our Lord Jesu hanging for our sin upon the cross, as the Gospel which we believe teacheth us. He hath his head bowed down, ready to kiss all those who truly turn to him. He hath his arms spread abroad, ready to embrace them. He is nailed fast, foot and hand, to the cross, to shew that he will dwell with them, and never wend away.

"This charter fire cannot bren (burn), nor water drown, nor thief rob, nor any creature destroy. For this Scripture the Father of heaven hath hallowed and made stedfast, and sent into all the world. Lock not this charter in thy coffer, but set it in thine heart; and all the creatures in heaven, or in earth, or in hell, may neither rob it nor bereave it from thee[1]."

But we must now follow Wycliffe to scenes of disquiet, in the midst of which his life of zealous labour was closed. The doctrine of transubstantiation had never been formally received by the Church of England; but from the time of Innocent III. and Stephen Langton, it had never been questioned. Wycliffe denied that it was the primitive doctrine; and asserted, on the contrary, that it had not been so held for the first thousand years after Christ. It is probable that he had already declared his own belief in his sermons, or in the work called *The Wicket*, a short English tract on this subject; but the year after the publication of his Bible, A.D. 1381, he openly delivered, in the schools at Oxford, certain *Conclusions*, in which he affirmed, "that the consecrated host which we see upon the altar is neither Christ, nor any part of him, but an effectual sign of him."

In his more popular writings on this subject he seems to have argued against the then received opinion, without propounding any theory of his own. Thus, in *The Wicket*, he says, "They make us believe a false law that they have made upon the sacred host, for the most falsest belief is taught in it. For where fynde ye that

[1] MS. in the British Museum.

ever Christ, or any of his disciples or apostles, taught any man to worship it?" And again. "You cannot create the world by using the words of creation. How shall you make the Creator of the world, by using the words by which ye say he made the bread his body?" But in a more elaborate work in Latin, called his *Dialogues*, which has internal evidence of having been written late in his career, he argues very strongly that it is the body of Christ in the form of bread, and quotes the decree against Berengarius, to show that the Roman Church then thought so. He writes always as a Catholic, speaking of those who hold the other doctrines as heretics who contradict the teaching of the Church. But in proof that it still is bread, he quotes St. Augustine, who says that, "give us this day our daily bread" in the Lord's prayer, has reference to the holy eucharist; and St. Paul, that "the bread which we break is the communion of the body of Christ[1]."

There seems no reason to doubt that a great proportion of the Oxford men thought with Wycliffe in their hearts. But the chancellor of Oxford that year, William Berton, or Barton[2], was against him, and he procured a decree to be passed by twelve doctors, chiefly members of the monastic orders, or friars, affirming transubstantiation, and pronouncing sentence of imprisonment and suspension from office in the University, as well as excommunication, against all who should hold the contrary.

It seems that this decree, though it had the sanction certainly of the University authorities, was not obtained without some contrivance; for Wycliffe was not aware of it until it was promulgated in the schools of the Austin friars, where he was sitting in his doctor's

---

[1] *Dialogorum*, part iv. c. iii.

[2] It seems probable that he was the same as William Burton, who had been employed, together with the Bishop of Bangor, on the first of the two embassies to the Pope in the reign of Edward III., and who, on the occasion of the second embassy, was superseded in favour of Wycliffe. The chancellor was then a resident officer of the University.

chair, and teaching the opposite doctrine. When he had recovered from his first surprise, he declared that neither the chancellor nor those who had acted with him could refute what he had taught; and as this decree would suspend him from his functions in the University, he appealed from it to the king in parliament. This proceeding, as it was a new assertion of the supremacy of the sovereign over the authorities of the Church, was looked upon as a further proof of heresy; and probably it would have led to further conflict between the two powers. But about this time occurred that terrible outbreak of the peasantry, before alluded to, which for a time threatened destruction to the whole established order of society; and the primate Sudbury, who was informed of what had passed at Oxford, before he had time to interfere, was murdered by the mob on Tower-hill, June 13, 1381.

Courtney, whom we have seen distinguished for his activity against Wycliffe, was Sudbury's successor, elected by the Church of Canterbury, with the king's assent, in the following August; but it was not till the early part of the next year that he received the pope's confirmation. The parliament met in May, 1382, and here Wycliffe is said to have presented his petition or complaint[1]; in which, not confining himself to the matter of dispute at Oxford, he prayed the assent of the king, the Duke of Lancaster, and other great men of the realm assembled in parliament, to four articles: 1. That all members of religious orders of whatever denomination might have free liberty to leave their rule, keeping only to the rule of the Gospel. (It is mentioned that several monks and canons were favourable to his views of reformation; and this may have suggested this first article.) 2. That those who had condemned him for teaching that the king might seize the property of delinquent churchmen, might be amended

[1] Lewis's *Life of Wycliffe*, p. 97. James's *Two Treatises*, pp. 1—17.

of their error. He argues with great force against the immunity of churchmen from the common laws, showing how it gave them encouragement to foment treasons and conspiracies. 3. That the tithes and offerings paid to monasteries and disreputable priests should be stopped, and given to true men, or distributed to the poor. He seems to speak here of both as voluntary contributions; but he may mean to object, as he had done before, against extorting them by excommunication. 4. That Christ's doctrine of the sacrament of his body, as it is plainly taught in the New Testament by Christ and his apostles, might be taught openly in churches to Christian people. He does not explain more fully what he thought that doctrine was[1].

There were many of the nobility and members of this parliament, who were ready to listen to plans for seizing on the Church's property; but few who had any ability or knowledge to consider the proposed reformation of the Church's doctrine. Accordingly, after his appeal had been presented, John of Gaunt came in, and forbade him to treat any more of the sacrament of the altar[2]. Yet

---

[1] Walsingham speaks of a paper of different conclusions from this, as presented to parliament by Wycliffe. It relates to the preferments held by foreigners in England; their conveying of treasure out of the realm; the danger of unlimited obedience of the king to the pope; and complains of clergymen being enslaved to worldly offices; and of imprisonment as not a proper punishment for excommunicated persons. *It also recommends the seizure and sale of the Church-lands, before any new or unusual taxes were imposed.* Lewis, where he reports it, omits this remarkable article. As, however, we seem to have Wycliffe's petition extant in his own words, the substance of which is given in the text, Walsingham has perhaps reported another document, prepared by some more thorough-going reformer.

[2] There is much uncertainty as to the order of events. The condemnation of Wycliffe by the University was in the summer of 1381. The register of Archbishop Sudbury states that he then appealed to the king, and that, after his appeal, John of Gaunt came in, and forbade him to handle that matter any more. But his appeal was presented to parliament, and no session of parliament was held till May, 1382, at the same time with the synod at the

there was a spirit evinced by the Commons which seems to have been awakened by that feeling to which he had given so great an impulse. The upper house had passed a law in the preceding session for the imprisonment of heretics, which, having the king's assent, was enrolled as a statute without being submitted to the Commons, who now insisted that it should be erased. The spiritual peers at this time made up the greater proportion of the House of Lords[1], but this independent spirit of the Commons was a mark of the increasing influence of the middle classes in society, with whom the strength lay in the cause of Reformation.

Meantime the new primate was equally prompt and resolute in his measures to suppress the doctrine of the Reformer. He convened a synod at the house of the Black Friars, in London, on the 17th of May; and a remarkable incident, which occurred at its first assembling, sufficiently denoted with what spirit he was animated. They had scarcely met, when the city

---

Black Friars, which condemned his opinions and established transubstantiation. It *may* have been presented to that parliament, as is here assumed, according to the usual account. But if the second clause refers to the decree of the synod which had condemned "this counsel," and not merely to that of the University, it must have been presented afterwards. And if Foxe be correct in stating that the next parliament met at Oxford with the Convocation, it seems to reduce this intricate question to some consistency to suppose that it was *then* that the Duke of Lancaster, being at Oxford with the parliament, "came in," &c. This view is confirmed by the place which the entry in Sudbury's register occupies, for it comes after the notice of the readmission of Repington and the rest to their degrees, whereas the University decree against Wycliffe was a year before. It is probable, therefore, that the registrar inserted the account of the whole proceeding after the appeal, without noting the interval otherwise than by the words "*post appellationem.*"—See WILKINS, *Conc.* iii. *in loco.*

[1] In the early part of the reign of Henry VIII., the House of Lords contained fifty bishops and abbots, and about forty lay peers. At an earlier period, the proportion of churchmen was still larger. A great difference from our times, when there are only thirty bishops to more than four hundred lay peers.

of London felt a shock of earthquake. The monks and friars, who composed the great majority of the synod, were struck with superstitious fear, and would have interpreted it as a sign of the displeasure of heaven. But Courtney told them, on the contrary, it was a favourable omen; the shaking of the earth was caused by the expulsion of noxious vapours from within her bosom, and thus the removal of heretics from the communion of the Church would contribute to her health and peace. The sessions, therefore, went on; and on the 21st the synod came to a conclusion of deep importance in the subsequent history of the Church of England. Hitherto the dogma of transubstantiation, though generally received, had rested only upon the papal authority. But this synod declared, as the Oxford chancellor and doctors had done, that it was heresy to affirm that the material substance of bread and wine remain after consecration in the sacrament of the altar. Then followed a like condemnation of twenty-three other conclusions of Wycliffe, or attributed to him; among which last we must surely reckon that strange assertion, pretended here, and afterwards at the Council of Constance, to be collected from his writings, "that God ought to obey the devil." Wycliffe himself seems to have complained of it, in a tract which he put out afterwards, as invented to blacken his reputation[1]. Thus did the Church of England rivet upon herself the chains of Roman superstition, not because she had originally chosen wrong, but because she hated to be reformed, and had cast God's word behind her. There is one name, however, attached to this decree, which cannot be mentioned without reverence; it is that which stands second and next to the archbishop's, the name of William of Wykeham, bishop of Winchester, the founder of Winchester College, and New College at Oxford, a charitable and kind-spirited man,

[1] Lewis, c. vi. p. 117. See the following Chapter for a further notice of this charge.

a promoter of good discipline, and as a statesman faithful and exemplary. Far be it from us to separate ourselves on this account from sympathy with such a man; rather may we learn a lesson of charity, when we see how difficult it is to root out, even from generous minds, the errors in which they have been bred, and see them led astray by that attachment to things established, which, within proper limits, is one of the first qualities requisite in a governor of Church or State.

It is uncertain whether it was before this synod, or at a convocation afterwards held in Oxford, that Wycliffe seems to have appeared in person, and to have delivered in a confession in English, and one in Latin, respecting his belief as it concerned the sacrament of the altar. In these he so far modified[1] his first statement as to admit the real presence of the Saviour in the holy eucharist, which he might before have seemed to deny, when he said only that the bread which we see is an effectual sign of Christ. He now affirmed that "the eucharist is the body of Christ in the form of bread; and this worshipful sacrament is bread and Christ's body." It might be supposed from these words, that he believed what has since been called consubstantiation, as held by Luther. But it appears from a fuller statement in another work that he had no such meaning. "We are not to suppose," he says, "that the body of Christ comes down from heaven to the host consecrated in every church; no, it remains ever fast and sure in heaven. Therefore it has a spiritual presence in the host, not such as can be measured by length or breadth. The body of Christ, or his human nature, is indeed spiritually present at every point of the world; as Augustine and other

[1] It is sometimes said that he recanted: there is no evidence of any such thing; but perhaps this modification of his opinions may have given ground to the report, though in fact he now came nearer to what *we* of the Church of England believe.

doctors say, he is a king spiritually, in virtue and power, at every point of his kingdom. By the virtue of that body every part of the world is perfected. But we must believe that the body of Christ is in the consecrated host after another manner: it is, according to its constitution as a body, the host itself." "The body of Christ is there fairly and really. You may say, if you will, that it is there bodily and essentially, if you understand the word 'bodily,' as in the text of St. Paul to the Colossians, where he says that *in Christ dwelt all the fulness of the godhead bodily*[1]."

The Latin confession is full of metaphysical argument, in which he labours to turn the tables against his opponents, and to show that the notion of an accident without a subject, by which the friars explained the dogma of transubstantiation, involved a denial of the real presence itself. But as he distinctly adhered to his denial of transubstantiation, his explanation was not satisfactory; and no less than five doctors undertook to refute his opinions, of whom the foremost was the Chancellor Barton. At the time when the House of Commons had just petitioned against the persecuting statute, it was probably thought dangerous to imprison a man so popular as Wycliffe. His opponents took what would have been a surer way, had he lived to suffer by it, that of procuring him a summons to Rome, beyond the reach of his influential supporters; and in the meantime the king was persuaded to issue a proclamation, by which the Reformer and all who should maintain his opinions were banished from Oxford.

There was enough in the present aspect of things to terrify any mind less resolute than Wycliffe's. Several of his most distinguished disciples now recanted; his friends in Oxford were overborne by an adverse power; and the Duke of Lancaster declined all further interference in his favour. But there was no sign of weakness or hesitation in his conduct. He withdrew, after

[1] *Trialogus*, iv. 8 and 10.

the proclamation, again to Lutterworth, but continued thence to write and encourage those whom he had instructed, to maintain the doctrine he had taught. "I should indeed," he says, "be worse than an infidel, if I were not ready to defend, even to the death, the law of Christ. And I know that not all the heretics and antichrist's disciples in the world can impugn my sentiments on the holy eucharist, proved as they are by the Gospel. On the other hand, I put my full trust in the mercy of the Lord, that after this short and miserable life, I shall be abundantly rewarded by my Lord for maintaining this lawful controversy. I know, by the faith which I have learned from the Gospel, that antichrist and his council can only destroy the body; but that Christ, whose part I sustain, can cast both soul and body into hell. And I know that he cannot fail his servants in any thing that is expedient for them, since he freely exposed himself to the pains of death, and ordained that as many disciples as he loved should, for their profit, be tried with sharp tribulation." He plainly declares that the cause of men's falling into this heresy was their want of faith in the Gospel, and their taking the laws of popes and apocryphal legends in its place; which he calls of all unfaithfulness the worst, and "the most direct apostacy from our true father abbot, the Lord Jesus. Be it true," he says, "that Innocent III. went astray in this madness, as the friars lay it to his charge, that cannot prove this doctrine to be founded in the Gospel; and as I hold fast to the faith of the Gospel, I will deny this as the greatest heresy[1]."

In such labours the last energies of the great Reformer were expended. He was seized with the palsy within a few months after the conclusion of the proceedings at Oxford; but not so as to prevent him from continu-

[1] *Trialogus*, b. iv. 6. As he speaks in this place of presenting his conclusions to the prelates, "satrapis," it seems plain that this was written after the decree had been passed against him.

ing his labours as a parish priest, in which it was confessed that his life was exemplary. To this seizure he alludes in his answer to the summons from Urban VI., which arrived in the following year, commanding him to appear at Rome, and defend himself from the heresies laid to his charge. "If I might travel in my own person," he says, "I would, with God's will, go. But Christ has needed me to the contrary, and taught me to obey God rather than man." At the same time he professes his readiness to give an account of his faith to all true men, and especially to the Pope, whom he acknowledges to be the highest vicar that Christ has here in earth. But he speaks more like one who thought himself in capacity to advise, than to be advised by, the pontiff; and counsels him to give up his worldly lordship to worldly lords, and to seek to be greatest by following most closely the example of Christ,—advice much needed by the proud, revengeful man to whom it was addressed, whose reign was secured by deeds more befitting an eastern despot than a prelate of the Church.

This was almost the last public act of Wycliffe. He was assisting at the celebration of the holy communion in his church at Lutterworth on Innocent's day, A.D. 1384; and while thus engaged, he received the final summons of his heavenly Master. He was struck by a second stroke of palsy, which was so severe that he fell with it to the ground, and continued speechless from that moment to his death, which was on the last day of the same year.

CHAPTER IX.

WYCLIFFE'S CHARACTER, OPINIONS, AND FOLLOWERS. THE LOLLARDS. THEIR NUMBERS AND INFLUENCE. ACTS OF PARLIAMENT AGAINST THE PAPACY. ARCHBISHOP ARUNDEL.

> 'Tis said that this is bitterest pain,
> To know, and prize, yet crave in vain
> The sweets that truth and freedom give:
> Thus did this suffering champion strive,
> From wealth and friends and kindred driven,
> Upholding still the weight of heaven.—PINDAR.

THERE are few men whose opinions and character have been more variously estimated than Wycliffe's. The Romanists abroad, whose hostility is most lively against Luther and Calvin, have tried to prove him to be a forerunner of both, in denying the freedom of the will, and asserting a kind of fatal predestination. The English Church historians have not treated him with much more favour. Collier repeats the charges made against him from the writings of the friars who opposed him, but does not appear to have compared them with his own writings. On the other side, Milner seems to have questioned his sincerity, and scarcely allows him the praise of a Reformer. And Dr. Vaughan, an Independent, has indeed given him praise enough, but for opinions, which, in the view of a Church-of-England man, if he really held them, must rather turn to his dispraise.

We will take a few of the common charges against him. He is accused of holding that "dominion is founded in grace." The fact is, that the friars upheld the claim of the pope to the tribute exacted from subjects of the English crown, on the ground that "all things belong to the *saints:* therefore all countries ought to acknowledge this truth, by paying the de-

mands of Christ's vicegerent." "But if so," said Wycliffe, "the claim depends upon the *sanctity* of the pope's character; it is therefore forfeited, since the popes have sinned." And upon the strength of this argument, which was nothing else than what is known to logicians as a *reductio ad absurdum*, has been grounded this often-repeated calumny. Again, in an instance already alluded to, in his desire to magnify the goodness and mercy of God, he represented the Almighty as calling forth from the course of his providence the utmost possible happiness for his creatures, but thwarted in various ways by the malignity of Satan. From such expressions, his oppponents drew the perverse inference, that he taught "that God must obey the devil;" and this absurd blasphemy was gravely condemned at Oxford, and at the Council of Constance, as part of his tenets.

There is no question, however, that the title often given him, of Father of the Reformation, must belong to him as the prototype of some part of the evil as well as of the good connected with that event. His opinions on Church property, though there was much in the abuses of his time to excuse such sentiments, are inconsistent with the scriptural precedents on which he founded them, and were formed on fanciful views of perfection, which hardly belong to the fallen state of man. "In proportion," he said, "as a Gospel-preacher fulfils his office with greater poverty, so much the more, other qualifications being equal, does he please God[1]." Much more enlightened is the doctrine of St. Clement of Alexandria on this point, in his treatise, entitled *What rich man can be saved?* Riches, according to him, are simply neither good nor evil; they are like beauty or strength, instruments only, which may be either well or ill employed. Worldly goods, the abundance of which makes wealth, are necessary in order to many good works which Jesus Christ has commanded;

[1] *Trialogus*, iv. 17.

else how could any man give alms? On the contrary, extreme poverty is a hindrance to many duties, and a source of many violent temptations, as, to fraud, to base expedients of living, and to despair. But in Wycliffe's time the writings of the Greek fathers were unknown.

He complained that priests were forbidden to say mass or to preach the Gospel in a bishop's diocese without leave of the bishop. But this is a necessary rule of Church-order; and his neglect of it can only be excused by the extreme corruptions of the time. In his invectives against lordly prelates and popes, and cardinals and archbishops, archdeacons, monks, and canons, he might seem to aim at the destruction of the different orders of the ministry; but this was not his meaning; for he affirms again and again, that "prelates and priests, ordained of God, came in the stead of apostles and disciples;" and that it would be "treasonable presumption" in temporal lords so to withhold their alms from the Church as to fail to "maintain the ordinance of Christ[1]."

While, therefore, his enmity to the temporal rank of churchmen, and some few other points, may serve to unite him in sympathy with those who dissent from the Church of the Reformation, his views of the royal supremacy, his preaching of Christ crucified, his zeal for making known the Scriptures, and his determined maintenance of the purer doctrine of the holy communion, should serve much rather to connect his name with those of the reformers of that Church. Another principle of his doctrine was to go back, as far as he had the means, to better and purer times, before, as he expressed himself, Satan was set loose, a thousand years after Christ came. He strove to form his views by the writings of St. Jerome and St. Augustine, while he gave pre-eminence to the written Word of God. But he did not reject any light which might be afforded

[1] Lewis, c. viii. *Of Prelates.* MS. *Trialogus*, iv. 17.

him by Anselm, Fitzralph, and Grostête, whom he never mentions but in terms of the greatest respect, and often fortifies his own positions by reference to his writings[1].

It has been mentioned as a strange thing, that Wycliffe should have escaped imprisonment, and died quietly at Lutterworth. And hence some have supposed that he made submission, or recanted his opinion on the sacrament of the altar. But it has been shown that he was driven from Oxford, and his enemies were designing to have him conveyed to Rome, when a merciful Providence rescued him by a better summons. It is impossible to show any proof of this supposed weakness. Others have wondered how it was that he did not quit the communion of the Church, since he found so much of antichristian practices in her communion[2]. But he never professed to think it the duty of any Christian to leave the Church; he would have reformed the Church itself, not have set up a rival communion; and he did the utmost that conscience dictated in raising his voice against the corruptions which prevailed.

It had been for a long time supposed, and stated by one writer after another, that Wycliffe's enmity against popes and prelates began in his being deprived of the wardenship of Canterbury Hall, Oxford, (to which he had been appointed by its founder, Archbishop Islip,) by his successor Archbishop Langham, and afterwards by Pope Urban V[3]. But it has now been proved, on undeniable evidence, that there were two of his name at Oxford at the same time, and it has been inferred

[1] Mr. Hallam says of Grostête, "it is a strange thing to reckon him among the precursors of the Reformation." (*Middle Ages*, c. vii.) If he had examined Wycliffe's writings, he might have found reason to modify this opinion.

[2] Collier.

[3] Particularly by Anthony Wood, T. Warton, and other Oxford writers. Foxe says that it was "Simon Sudburie" who deprived him.

that the warden of Canterbury Hall, John Wiclyve, and the Reformer Wycliffe, were two totally different persons[1]. The Reformer seems to have studied at Queen's College, then newly founded by Robert Eglesfield, in A.D. 1340, for students from the north. In A.D. 1361 he seems to have been made master of Balliol; and in A.D. 1375 he was preferred to the prebend of Westbury and rectory of Lutterworth. If this important discovery can be fully established, the writer who has made it justly remarks, that the most serious charge ever brought against Wycliffe will be entirely disproved; and the well-head of the Reformation proved to be untainted with any mixture of personal resentment or disappointed pride.

It has been necessary to enter thus fully into the public life and doctrine of this great man; for it may be truly said of all that was done for reformation in England or abroad for the next half-century, he was the doer of it. He was the first who dared to outface the wasting system of corruption and tyranny which had overspread all Europe; and his success had shown how much may be done against the world by one single-hearted man valiant for truth. His death, however, left the cause without a leader of ability or courage to carry on what he had begun. Philip Repington had preached in Oxford in favour of Wycliffe after the decree of the doctors against him. He had since been excommunicated and a fugitive; and after a short interval he came forward to retract those principles which he had preached and maintained. He submitted himself to Archbishop Courtney before the convocation, was restored to his University-degree, and

[1] A writer, who signs his initials W. C., in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for August, 1841, p. 146–8. But it appears that in the same year 1366, in which John Wiclyve was appointed to Canterbury Hall, another person, J. de Hungate, was chosen master of Balliol, which leads to the inference that the warden of Canterbury Hall was the Reformer, else why did he cease to be master of Balliol? So that this intricate question is reopened.

read his recantation at Paul's Cross. Presently we find him made abbot of Leicester, then chancellor of Oxford, and in A.D. 1405 the Pope gave him the bishopric of Lincoln. Gregory XII., a pope of doubtful title, afterwards raised him to the dignity of a cardinal. It is the unhappy fate of apostates that they are almost forced, by the suspicion which attaches to their character, to prove their sincerity by fiercer zeal than common for the cause to which they have transferred their allegiance. Repington, with these honours upon him, became a bitter persecutor of his former friends; so that he was called in scorn by both parties by the nickname of *Rampington*, for his fury and violence. Yet this unhappy man, like many others in such sifting times, may have had at last some compunctious visitings; for the end of all was, that, after having embrued his hands in the blood of the Lollards[1], he resigned his bishopric, and passed his last years in retirement.

The history of Nicholas Hereford is more uncertain. He seems to have been one of Wycliffe's most intimate associates, had aided him in the translation of the Bible, and is described as the most learned and accomplished of all the Lollard preachers. He had so much simplicity with his zeal for reformation, that he went of his own accord to Rome to plead his cause before the Pope. He might almost with equal safety at such a time have ventured his head into a lion's mouth.

---

[1] Pope Boniface IX., in writing to Richard II. to root out the Lollards, says, "They call themselves the poor of Christ; but the common people more properly call them Lollards,—as a man should say, *withered darnel*." He therefore derived it from the Latin word *lolium*. But it is more consistent with the analogy of language to suppose that the people took the word from their vernacular tongue. Some ascribe it to their practice of psalm-singing; from the old English verb to *loll* or *lull*, signifying to sing. Chaucer calls them "Lollers." But they are said to have been opposed to psalm-singing: and others think it was the name of a sect in Germany.

Urban VI. with his cardinals declared his doctrines so heretical, that the preacher merited burning; but, through respect to the English nation, who had honoured him for the true pope, not from any feeling of generosity towards a man who had confided his life to his keeping, he changed the sentence to one of perpetual imprisonment. Some of the nobles of Italy, sensitive of the disgrace brought upon them by this breach of faith, were importunate with the Pope for his release; but to no purpose.[1] Some time after, in the absence of Urban from Rome, the populace rose in tumult, broke into his palace, and set free the prisoners; among whom was Nicholas Hereford, who took the opportunity to return to England. Here, it is said, he was again imprisoned by Courtney; before whom he had appeared and made his submission at the synod, in A.D. 1382, at Blackfriars. He seems, however, to have been at liberty again shortly afterwards; as in A.D. 1387, he is mentioned as giving offence by recommending a dying clergyman to confess to God, and not trouble his conscience for want of priestly absolution[2]. In A.D. 1391 he was canon of the cathedral of Hereford, and sat with the bishop there at the trial of Walter Brute, a Welch Lollard; so that he was then considered a conformist. But the very next year he owed his safety to the king's letters of protection, obtained for him by John of Gaunt; having therefore again incurred suspicion. It seems that at length, wearied out with the risks he had undergone, and probably with a conscience not altogether clear of the reproach of weakness, he took the habit of a Carthusian, and ended his days in a monastery at Coventry.

The same want of firmness was shown by Aston, Bedeman, Purvey, and several others, who were among Wycliffe's scholars, and after labouring to propagate his opinions, gave in their recantations. Some doubt

[1] KNYGHTON, col. 2657, *et seq.*
[2] WALSINGHAM, p. 328.

must rest upon the facts reported by the historians of the time respecting some of these men; since the submissions which they are said to have made do not agree with the existing records in public offices and bishops' registers. But both the terror of punishment and hope of reward were abundantly employed to recover them to the obedience of the Church—or, as we should rather say, of that usurped power which then controlled the Church, and deprived its members of their Christian liberty. Still the new opinions continued to spread among all classes. Knyghton, a chronicler of this period, and canon of Leicester, in which neighbourhood Wycliffe's influence was very great, complains that you could not meet two persons in the street, but one of them was a Lollard. Wycliffe himself had said he believed a third part of the clergy were with him in their hearts. And among the laity of rank and dignity, besides John of Gaunt, and his brother Thomas of Woodstock, duke of Gloucester, of the royal blood, were William Montague, earl of Salisbury, Sir John Montague his brother, Sir Lewis Clifford, Sir Thomas Latimer, Sir William Neville, and many others, whose names denote them to have been of the most distinguished families in England.

Among these distinguished persons, it is easy to see that in many instances political motives had more than their due influence in the part they took. The party of the Dukes of Lancaster and Gloucester was generally in opposition to the government of the king, and they seem to have used the Lollards to strengthen their influence against the bishops, who held offices about the court. Neither of these princes was of such character that one can suppose they were much inspired with the spirit of religious reformation. John of Gaunt had a castle at Leicester, and a residence at Lincoln; and, as the new doctrines had so many supporters in the neighbourhood, it was his policy to protect them. There is extant, among the tracts attributed to Wycliffe, but written after his death, a *Report of a*

Conference between a Friar and a Chaplain of Thomas of Woodstock. The chaplain addresses it to his patron, in whose presence the controversy had been held, begging him to decide the truth, and "take the file to rub away the rust of error in either party." This chaplain was evidently one who had learnt Wycliffe's arguments against the principles of the mendicant orders. But there seems to be no other proof that this prince had any sympathy with the disciples of Wycliffe. His public character was, as Henry remarks, that of an ambitious, proud, and turbulent politician; and he lost his life in a bloody act of revenge taken by his nephew, King Richard, and the rival faction.

The Montagues come in for a share of Walsingham's abuse, for removing the images of saints from their private chapels. This was clearly a sign that they had received a portion of the reformed doctrine, as we find similar acts charged afterwards against Sir John Oldcastle. Sir John Montague's will appears to have contained no direction for masses to be offered for him after his death[1]. And Sir Thomas Latimer's, dated September 13, 1401, is expressed as follows:—

"In the name of God Amen. I, Thomas Latymer, of Braybroke, a false knight to God, thanking God of his mercy, having such mind as he vouchsafeth, desiring that his will be fulfilled in me and in all goods that he hath chosen me to keep, do make my testament. First, I acknowledge me unworthy to bequeath him anything of my power, and therefore I pray to him meekly, of his grace, that he will take so poor a present as my wretched soul is into his mercy, through the beseeching of his blessed mother and his holy saints; and I give my wretched body to be buried where that ever I die, in the next churchyard that God may vouchsafe me, and not in the church, but in the uttermost corner, as he that is unworthy to lie therein, save the mercy of God. And that there be no manner of cost done about

[1] Lewis, c. x.

my burying, neither in meat, nor in drink, nor in no other thing, but to any such one who needeth it, after the law of God; nor any lights, save two tapers of wax. And anon, as I be dead, put me in the earth[1]," &c.

Sir Lewis Clifford, whom he names as executor with his wife, also left a will drawn up in the same strain of penitence and humility, and directing his body to be laid in the churchyard. These wills are remarkable proofs of the simpler feeling and more enlightened piety which Wycliffe's preaching had awakened. In the interval which succeeded before the Reformation, it was considered almost a mark of heresy for a man to make no mention in his will of masses for his soul; and the Emperor Charles V. fell under great suspicion of Lutheranism, after his death, for this omission; so that his confessor, and many distinguished Spanish clergymen, who had been his friends, were accused and imprisoned by the Inquisition. In the early part of the reign of Henry VIII., the chancellor of Worcester took up the body of William Tracie, Esquire, of Todyngton, in Gloucestershire, and committed it to the flames, for no other offence than having said in his will that he believed there was "but one Mediator between God and men, which is Jesus Christ. So that *he did accept none in heaven or earth to be his mediator between him and God*, but only Jesus Christ[2]." As to the usual scenes acted in these days before the death of a wealthy client of fortune, Erasmus probably gives a picture not much beyond the truth:—

"When Sir George had been given over by his physicians, he sent for Bernardin, the warden of the Franciscans, to take his confession. He had scarcely done so, when a tribe of the four mendicant orders began to crowd towards the house, like vultures after a

---

[1] Bridges' *Northants*, ii. p. 11.

[2] Tracie's will, having been printed by Tindal together with Wycliffe's *Wicket*, (Noremburg, A.D. 1546,) will be given in Appendix D.

carcass. The parish priest was called to give him extreme unction, and the holy symbol of the Lord's body; but here arose a bitter strife between this priest and the friars; for he said he would neither give the unction, nor anything else, to a sick man whose confession he had not heard himself. The quarrel was appeased by the knight's offering to confess again, and promising to pay handsomely all fees and dues for tolling the bells, for funeral chaunts, monumental tablet, and burial service. The priest did his office, and took his leave. But then arose another storm and tempest. There had already come only friars of the four orders; now came another, one of the crossed or crouched friars[1]. The other four all set upon him: 'Who ever heard,' said they, 'of a waggon that went on five wheels? What impudence to make the number of mendicant orders greater than that of the four evangelists! We might as well have all the beggars here from the cross-roads and bridge-ends.' 'And pray,' said the crouched friar, 'how did the waggon of the Church go when there were no mendicant orders at all, or when there was but one, or when there were three? As to the evangelists, you might as well tell me that a dye has four corners. Let the Austin friars tell me, when did St. Austin act the mendicant? And the Carmelites, when did Elijah do so?' However, as he was but one against four, he made his retreat; but he left the Franciscan and Dominican to carry on the same conflict against the other two orders, which they called intrusive orders, and not genuine. All this passed in the ante-room, leading to the sick chamber; but so loud, that the sick man could hear. To put an end to the strife, he sent out a message by his wife to bid the Carmelites and Austin friars return home; they should be as well provided as the rest with food and almsgifts,

[1] There were a few of these friars in England; but Bishop Gros-ête had them expelled in his time, and afterwards they thrived but little.

but at their own convents. He then gave directions about his funeral, that all the orders, including the fifth, should be invited, nine out of each order; the number five in honour of the five books of Moses, the nine in harmony with the nine orders of angels[1]; each order to carry their own cross or crucifix before them, and to chaunt their funeral songs. Then thirty minstrels, according to the number of the pieces of silver for which our Lord was sold; and twelve mourners, representing the number of the apostles, and twelve torch-bearers clothed in black[2]. Next, he gave directions about his interment. The body was to be placed at the right side of the high altar, in a marble tomb raised four feet above the ground; his effigy, sculptured in the finest marble, to be laid above, armed from top to toe, with helm and crest, and shield on his left arm; his sword, with gilded hilt, by his side; his belt and spurs, as befitted a knight, and a leopard at his feet. The border of the tomb was to have an inscription suitable to so great a man. But his heart he wished to have buried apart in the Franciscan chapel; and his bowels he gave as a legacy to the parish priest, to be honourably disposed of in his lady-chapel. And, as he had been a noble captain, who well knew how to marshal his men, and to overrule any disputes, he provided that the Franciscans and Dominicans should draw lots for precedence in the procession; after them, the other three were also to draw lots; then the parish priest and other clergy to come last, or first, as the friars should determine.

---

[1] According to a notion prevalent in the middle ages, derived from a supposititious work of Dionysius the Areopagite, there were nine orders of angels, differing in dignity: seraphim, cherubim, thrones, dominations, princedoms, virtues, powers, archangels, and angels.

[2] This superstitious regard to sacred numbers often led to gross profaneness, being applied to the most trifling occasions; as when a friar would beg three faggots for his convent in honour of the Trinity; and such abuse led to blasphemous replies.

"As the sick man now gave signs that his time was drawing to a close, the last act of the drama was prepared. There was read a brief of the Pope's, promising that all his sins should be blotted out, and setting him free from all fear of purgatory. As ill luck would have it, there was his wife's brother, a lawyer, present, who found out a flaw in the form of the instrument, and threw in a suspicion of some forgery. The knight was almost distracted; but Friar Vincent, the Dominican, manfully interfered: 'Be comforted,' he said; 'set your mind at ease, Sir George. If there is any omission or correction needed in the bill, I will supply it. I have the license of the Pope to do it; and, my soul for yours, if all be not right.' The dying man seemed revived at this; and the friars went on to recite some bonds, giving him partnership in all the good works to be done by their four orders, and the fifth beside; and also an enumeration of all the masses and psalm-singings which should accompany his soul after its departure. The number was infinite. He was then stretched out upon the floor on a straw mattress sprinkled with a small quantity of fine ashes. A Franciscan frock and cowl were laid upon it, ready to be fitted to his body, and consecrated with holy water and a short prayer. Under the cowl were deposited the Pope's brief of indulgence and the bonds. When he was placed upon the mattress, he had a small crucifix put into his right hand, which he kissed, and, calling it his shield against the enemy of his soul, laid it on his left shoulder. The two friars kneeling on each side, bade him think that he had St. Dominic and St. Francis to defend him; and as he could now no longer use his voice, he was desired to turn his head to either side in token that he heard, and was assured by what they said. Thus he breathed his last. He had before, by will, disposed of his great wealth, in different shares, to his wife and children; but on condition that his wife should become a Beguine—something between a nun and a lay woman; his eldest son should go to

Rome, and there, being made a priest, should daily offer masses and visit the holy places for the good of his father's soul; his younger son should become a friar of the Franciscan order, and carry his portion into the convent; his two daughters, one became a poor sister of St. Clare, the other of St. Catherine of Sienna."

The scene here depicted has some appearance of exaggeration or satire, but is intended to describe the deplorable system which the writer himself had witnessed. It is placed in contrast with the will of Sir Thomas Latimer, that it may be judged against what a mass of corrupting superstition, customarily established, the old English gentlemen, who embraced Wycliffe's doctrine, had to contend. It was to be expected, however, that, in the recoil from such debasing self-delusion and false worship, some excesses would appear in the conduct of those who had been kept in ignorance and oppression. Such appears to have been the effect of imperfect instruction on the minds of many, both high and low, among the Lollards; whose acts and words, respecting the holy sacrament of the altar, cannot be excused from sad impiety. Such is the account of Sir Lawrence de St. Martin, a knight of Wiltshire, as related by Walsingham, who carried home the consecrated bread to eat it in derision, as an accompaniment to his wine and oysters at supper [1]. Such is the only excuse to be given for many ribald speeches, which Foxe relates, as spoken

[1] Foxe tells this story of the knight of Wilts, as if "the Earl of Salisburie" had done it; but he only says, "he carried the sacrament home to his house." This is not true to the record. Lewis tells it as he found it; but translates "*singulis feriis sextis*" "every sixth holyday," instead of "every Friday;" on which the knight was to go to the cross at Salisbury, and do penance on his knees in his shirt. He seems, as others have done, rather to discredit the story. There appears to be no just ground for this. It is probable; and the fact of the erection of the cross must have been known. In our zeal against superstition, let us not palliate impiety.

by persons whom he mentions among the sufferers for truth. If such persons were visited with severe penances, it was no more than they might expect. As to worse punishments, if they were ever inflicted on these offenders, they were perhaps impolitic, but not wholly unjustifiable; but the misfortune was, that the governors of the Church were incapable of distinguishing bold impiety from conscientious sincerity and constancy in asserting what was believed to be the revealed will of God.

In the same year in which Wycliffe died, the parliament itself petitioned the king to put down the new sect; and this petition was followed by a royal commission to suppress their writings; on which occasion Richard II. assumed, as he did in several of his proclamations, the title of Defender of the Faith. By this commission inquisitors were first appointed to search for heretics; two of whom, Dr. Brightwell, dean of Leicester College, and Sir Richard de Barrowe, were connected with the district of Wycliffe's labours. It would seem, however, that John of Gaunt still gave the Lollards some protection. Peter Pateshall, an Austin friar, had become a preacher of their tenets; and he is called the Duke of Lancaster's chaplain. It is related of him that he was preaching in the church of St. Christopher in London, and declaiming violently against the friars, when one of them got up in the same church, and began to preach against him, in order to put him down. A riot ensued; the mob took part with the Lollard, and the friars who were present had a narrow escape of their lives. And then the mob posted upon St. Paul's doors the accusations of Pateshall against his former associates, in which he imputed to them the most atrocious practices, and the commission of many murders. Such proceedings do no credit to the cause of the Reformers; for good men know that it is not the part of a Christian to become the accuser of his brethren, except in a judicial inquiry; and he who will anticipate the office of the only righteous Judge, must take his

account to be suspected, even though he speak the truth.

This was in the year 1387; but in the following year a priest of the name of Wimbleton delivered a sermon at St. Paul's cross of a very different temper, and which is the more worthy of notice on account of the imputations of a disorderly spirit so often brought, and not always undeservedly, against the preachers of these opinions. It was on the text, *Give an account of thy stewardship* (St. Luke xvi. 2); on which subject he thus speaks of the duties of all classes of the people. "Every one see to what estate God hath called him, and therein remain and labour, according to his degree. Thou that art a labourer or artisan, do this truly. If thou art a servant or a bondman, be subject and lowly, in dread of displeasing thy lord. If thou art a knight or a lord, defend the poor and needy from hands that will harm them. If thou art a priest, rebuke, pray, reprove, in all patience and doctrine. Rebuke those that are negligent, pray for those that are obedient, reprove those that are disobedient to God." He then enlarges upon the duties of the several orders of priests, governors, and people; adverting with godly indignation, indeed, but with no ungodly abuse, to the prevalent simony and luxury of the clergy. And in conclusion, having dwelt upon that exposition of the Apocalypse which all this sect adopted, that the last times were come, he describes the day of judgment, and ends with this apostrophe: "But joy, and joy, and joy to them that be saved. Joy in God, joy in themselves, joy in each other that are saved. Joy, because their labour is brought to so gracious an end. Joy, because they have escaped the pains of hell. Joy, for their bliss that they have in the sight of God."

It is in the same year in which this sermon was preached, that the Lollard priests are accused of having taken upon them to confer orders. If this fact be correct, it is the first instance in history of presbyterian ordination. But it rests on the slightest possible autho-

rity[1], and there is strong evidence the other way, as we shall see hereafter. Wycliffe himself did not deny that the power of ordination is reserved to the bishops; and if there is any accusation of this kind made against particular persons, it is not confirmed by existing records. It is more probable that the disciples of the first preachers of Wycliffe's tenets might keep up the spirit they had themselves imbibed by occasional exhortations, without any alleged authority, than that they had as yet any definite notion of a presbyterian ministry.

During this period, while the contest between the two parties was yet in suspense, the history of the adventures of William Swinderby may serve for a specimen of the rest. He was a priest at Leicester, where he preached with great earnestness against the vices of the inhabitants, making use sometimes of the churches, sometimes of the chapel of an adjoining hospital, and not unfrequently addressing the people in the streets and markets, as the friars also were accustomed to do. He was at this time protected by John of Gaunt, who allowed him to live in his park, where for some time he passed his days as a recluse, and was known as William the Hermit. But resuming his practice of preaching, he was cited before the bishop at Lincoln, where several articles were exhibited against him as containing the opinions which he had preached. The friars were earnest for his conviction, and, by way of bravado, had prepared fuel, as if to burn him. They could hardly expect to do so, since, even if he were convicted of heresy, the king's writ would be required for his execution, and no such writ had ever yet been issued. But Swinderby denied that he had held the opinions imputed to him, and on that ground undertook to retract them in every church where he had preached; and having also pledged himself to preach no more in Lin-

[1] WALSINGHAM, p. 340. He says that a Lollard confessed it to the Bishop of Salisbury, at Sunning, Berks; but see p. 204.

coln diocese, he was dismissed on the intercession of powerful friends. He retired to the remote districts of Herefordshire, on the borders of Wales; and here, in a secluded spot, called Derwoldswood, he made use of a chantry, where mass was said a few times only in the year, in which he not only preached, but administered the holy communion to the laity in both kinds. It is singular to find those lone chapelries, which were founded for masses for the souls of the departed, converted to the use of that very class of men who were most opposed to the whole system to which they owed their origin. Here also Swinderby had powerful supporters; for the bishop of Hereford having cited him to his court, could only succeed in bringing the preacher before him by the promise that he should be dismissed unharmed. Under this promise he appeared, and in a written answer defended with piety and constant reference to Scripture, if not always with success, the leading opinions of his sect: "That tithes may be withheld from wicked priests; that priests have a commission to preach the gospel independent of the license of a bishop, and are bound to exercise their function; that confession to a good priest is good and salutary, but that God only, and not the priest, can remit sin; that baptism by a good priest, with the prayers of good people, is more availing than by a wicked one; that the sacrament of the altar is bread and Christ's body; that the pope is antichrist." Swinderby being dismissed, according to the bishop's promise, would never appear again, though often cited, and was therefore pronounced excommunicate, from which sentence he appealed to the king in parliament, and in support of his appeal presented a petition, from which the following are extracts:—"Dear sirs, so as we have seen by many tokens that this world comes to an end, and all that ever have been brought forth of Adam's kind into this world shall come together at doomsday, rich and poor, each one to give account and receive after his deeds, joy or pain for evermore, therefore make we our works

good the while that God of mercies abides, and be ye stable and true to God, and ye shall see his help about ye." He goes on at great length with similar exhortations, urging them not to be ashamed of Christ, and apparently alluding to his own weakness in having recanted before the bishop of Lincoln; and he declares that his object is "the most worship of God, the showing of the truth, and the amendment of holy Church."

There is an eloquence in the very simplicity of this appeal from a poor, and perhaps not very learned, clergyman, zealous for what he believed the cause of God, in the midst of contempt and danger, which claims forgiveness for some errors in the character and in the opinions of its author. But there must have been a strong feeling in favour of such opinions, when they could be thus presented to parliament; and it appears, from several laws enacted about this time, that the spirit of resistance to papal encroachment was as strong as ever. Three years before, the act of Edward III. against papal provisions[1], by which the pope usurped in fact the patronage of all dignities and preferments, had been renewed, and sentence of banishment pronounced against all who should hereafter infringe it. In A.D. 1391, the act of Edw. I. against giving lands in mortmain was renewed and enlarged[2], and the giving of tithes to monasteries was also restricted[3]: and now in 1392 the famous act of *præmunire*[4] was repeated, with some circumstances worthy of remark. It is said to have been introduced by Lord Cobham, who, as Sir John Oldcastle, may have been at this time a member of the House of Commons, and whom we now first meet with in that contest in which he became so fatally conspicuous. The act recites the petition of the Commons,

[1] 25 Ed. III. st. 2, A.D. 1350. 13 R. II. st. 2, § 2, 1389.
[2] 7 Ed. I. st. 2. 15 R. II. c. 5.
[3] 15 R. II. c. 6.
[4] 27 Ed. III. st. 1, c. 1. 16 R. II. c. 5.

in which they declare that if the present system of papal interference be continued, "the crown of England, which hath been so free at all times, that it hath been in no earthly subjection, but immediately subject to God in all things touching the regalty of the same crown, and to none other, should be submitted to the pope, and the laws and statutes of the realm by him defeated and avoided at his will, in perpetual destruction of the sovereignty of the king our lord, his crown and regalty, and of all his realm—which God defend." Here was an express assertion of that which is now called the royal supremacy, and which is commonly thought to have been first introduced at the Reformation. But the Commons did not rest here. They proceeded to pray the king, "and him require, by way of justice, that the opinions of all the lords, temporal and spiritual, might be taken separately on this point." This seems to have been aimed at the bishops; and accordingly Courtney, the archbishop, delivered his written answer, in which, after reciting the above declaration of the Commons, he declared that he adhered to it, and that he assented to the passing of the law. It was passed accordingly; and the rest of the bishops having given a similar answer, their assent was solemnly recorded in the body of the statute. A proclamation was then issued, ordering all English beneficed clergy who were absent at Rome, to return home, or forfeit their preferments. We shall see that an almost similar course was pursued at the time that Henry VIII. finally broke the power of the Roman see in England.

It would seem as if the king had been more inclined than the parliament to aid the bishops against the Lollards; for in the next year, A.D. 1392, he gave them a commission to arrest Swinderby; and two years afterwards another commission against Walter Brute, a Welchman of his party, who, though a layman, was a man of considerable learning, and master of arts at

Oxford[1]. But these commissions were issued in consequence of express and earnest representations from the pope himself. In A.D. 1395, such was the confidence of this party in their numbers, and in the power of their supporters, that they availed themselves of the absence of the king in Ireland, to put up papers on the doors of St. Paul's and other principal churches in London, severely reflecting on the clergy; and at the same time to present a general petition from their body to the parliament, in which, under twelve heads, they summed up their accusations against the Church, as follows:—

I. That when the Church of England began to mismanage her temporalities in conformity to the precedents of Rome, and the revenues of churches were appropriated to several places[2], faith, hope, and charity, began to take leave of her communion.

II. That the English priesthood derived from Rome is not that priesthood which Christ settled upon his apostles.

III. That the enjoining celibacy upon the clergy is the occasion of scandalous irregularities.

IV. That the feigned miracle of the sacrament of bread induceth all men, except it be a very few, into idolatry.

V. That exorcisms and benedictions pronounced over the bread and wine, and over the cross, the altar-stone, and the holy vestments, have more of necromancy than of sacred divinity.

VI. That the joining of secular offices with spiritual functions puts the kingdom out of the right way.

VII. That all religious foundations, in which special prayer is enjoined for the souls of individuals, are a

[1] One of the names in this commission is that of Thomas Oldcastle, a gentleman of Herefordshire, and probably the father of Lord Cobham.

[2] That is, to monasteries at a distance from the parish church; severed from it.

breach of charity, which would have us pray for all alike; and that such prayers may be displeasing to God, since it is probable all are damned who made such foundations.

VIII. That pilgrimages, prayers, and offerings to images and crosses are near of kin to idolatry.

IX. That auricular confession, and the feigned power of absolution, makes the priests proud, and gives occasion to intrigues and unchaste conversation.

X. That it is contrary to the Gospel to take any man's life for any offence whatever.

XI. That the vow of single life undertaken by women is the occasion of horrible sins.

XII. That all unnecessary trades should be abolished, as ministering to modes of life contrary to the Gospel rule, which enjoins that having food and raiment we be therewith content.

In this document we find many things which no well-informed mind can approve. The wholesale condemnation of religious foundations is a sad foretaste of the havoc to which such principles were to lead; and the reason on which it is grounded would be just as good against praying particularly for our friends who are alive. For they did not object to prayer for the dead in itself. Again; the denunciation against war and capital punishments, though it seems to be aimed chiefly at the system of crusades, would come with strange inconsistency from a party who even now began to count up their numbers, and to boast of their fighting-men, as if they would do battle for their cause. And yet we recognise in this petition the seeds of great and saving truths; and the errors with which they are intermixed, springing up together with the revival of scriptural learning, may serve to show that the Church herself must teach the truth, and not suppress it, if she would guard her people from error when the reaction comes.

It might be expected that the authorities of the Church would take alarm at such proceedings; but, it

seems, they thought it dangerous to interpose. "The bishops," says Walsingham, "saw and heard all these sayings and doings; but they went their ways, one to his farm, and another to his merchandise. There was not a shepherd who raised his voice to frighten the thieves, or his pastoral staff to drive them away, except the bishop of Norwich[1]. Blessed be his name to all posterity, that he did not suffer his people to be infected with such a pestilence! For he swore, and did not repent, that if any preacher of this perverse sect should presume to preach within his diocese, he would either burn him alive, or cut his head off. And there was not one of the whole company, who, knowing this peril, was in any haste for martyrdom." It would appear, that even Courtney himself was one of those who thought it necessary to yield to the time. But now we find among the foremost against the Lollards the name of another churchman, who was soon to teach them that the little finger of an Arundel was heavier than the loins of a Courtney.

Thomas Fitz-Alan, or Arundel, who on the death of Courtney, in A.D. 1396, was promoted to the archbishopric of Canterbury by papal provision, was at this time archbishop of York, having been elevated to that see by the same influence from the bishopric of Ely, to which also the pope had appointed him, though the king had nominated another candidate, and the convent had elected a third[2]. This chosen favourite of Rome was a man of small learning; for he never proceeded further than bachelor of arts; but he was the brother of the powerful Earl of Arundel, lord treasurer and lord high admiral, and he bore himself in his exalted station more as an imperious nobleman than as a father of the Church. On the presentation of the Lollards' petition, he had hastened himself to Dublin to urge the

[1] Henry Spencer, the leader of the Flemish crusade before mentioned.

[2] GODWIN, in *Vit. Arundel.*

immediate return of the king, who on his arrival severely rebuked Sir Lewis Clifford and others of the Commons, who had favoured those proceedings; and shortly afterwards, in a visitation of his diocese, he compelled some Lollards at Nottingham to take an oath, in which were the words, "I swear, that from henceforth *I will worship images.*" A most remarkable declaration, when we recollect how, in better times, the English Church had protested with an anathema against this very practice [1].

But events were now at hand which were to throw a darker shade over the history of this unhappy sect.

[1] See COLLIER, i. 309. CHURTON'S *Early Eng. Church*, c. ix. p. 176.

CHAPTER X.

USURPATION OF HENRY IV. THE PERSECUTING STATUTE. TRIALS OF THE LOLLARDS. LORD COBHAM.

> The woe's to come: the children yet unborn
> Shall feel this day as sharp to them as thorn.
>
> SHAKSPEARE. *Richard II.*

IF, as Shakspeare has said, the angels weep over the abuses and usurpations of earthly power, there is no page of English history more worthy of their tears than all that relates to the elevation of Henry Bolingbroke to the throne. It was a time when a weak prince, ruling in the wantonness of youth, had driven from him all faithful counsel; and a powerful faction, opposed to the court, having lost its leaders by a bloody death, was thirsting for revenge; when, exiled by an arbitrary sentence without a trial, and smarting for the unjust seizure of his patrimonial estates, the heir of Lancaster was joined in France by another exile, the primate Arundel.

He had been forced to leave England upon the death of his brother, whom the king, revoking his solemn pardon, had executed as a traitor. The populace, counting the dead earl a martyr to the cause of public liberty, went in crowds to visit his tomb; and it was reported that his head, after it was laid with his body in the coffin, had again become united with the trunk from which it was severed. To check this demonstration, and disprove the pretended miracle, the corpse was taken up and exposed; and the friars, at one of whose churches it lay, were ordered to remove the trophies and monument, and, by levelling the tomb with the pavement, to make the place undistinguishable

to beholders. Having thus attempted to abolish the memory of the dead, to take away all hope from the surviving brother, the king declared his see vacant, and, with the sanction of the pope, appointed a rival archbishop in his room.

Thus to each of these restless spirits seemed to have arisen that "necessity[1]," which nothing less than the highest principle and the most enlightened judgment would have enabled them to withstand. The same necessity invited the one to seize the deserted throne, the other to defend, with the sanction of the Church, an act which restored him to his former dignity. There was no want of solemn forms fit to consecrate an usurper[2]. The sacred oil with which Henry was anointed was out of that mysterious vial which the blessed Virgin was said to have given to Becket during his exile in France, telling him that the kings who should partake of it, should be good champions of holy Church. Arundel preached at his coronation, on the text, *This man shall reign over my people* (1 Sam. ix. 19); and in his sermon contrasted the manly virtues of Bolingbroke with the childish follies of the fallen Richard. All the bishops, either openly or tacitly, concurred, with the exception of Marks, bishop of Carlisle, in a change which promised them deliverance from the questions agitated in the parliaments of the former reign; and they counted, not unreasonably, on

[1] See SHAKSPEARE, *Rich. II.*

[2] In calling Henry IV. an usurper, it is not intended to express an opinion against the rights of his house in their subsequent contest with the house of York. He was an usurper because he invaded the throne of the then lawful occupant. But it is highly probable that the house of Lancaster would have been preferred to the Earl of March, in case of the peaceful death of Richard II.; and as the claim of York, a younger brother to Lancaster, had not accrued until he afterwards married the heiress of March, it is difficult to see what just right he could set up against the prescription of three generations with parliamentary and national consent, though not difficult to trace the righteous judgment of heaven against the original crime of Bolingbroke.

the favour of a sovereign whom their support had done so much to secure in his new possession. When the convocation of the clergy met at the assembling of his first parliament, instead of asking, as usual, for a subsidy more than equal to the taxes imposed on the laity, the pious usurper declared that he would not ask for their money, but their prayers.

This was soon followed by the statute for burning heretics. The first instances of a persecuting spirit which occurred in the primitive Church were checked by the openly expressed indignation of some of the most honourable names among the prelates of those holier times. In A.D. 384, when Priscillian, a Spanish bishop, of tenets undoubtedly heretical, had been put to death by the Emperor Maximus, at Treves in France, the Christian Church was so far from concurring in such a sentence, that not only St. Ambrose, bishop of Milan, but Siricius, bishop of Rome, solemnly protested against it. The bishop by whose sentence the heretic had been delivered to the civil power, was deposed by a council of the Church; and St. Martin, the apostle of the French, separated himself from his communion[1]. So thought the Church of the Fathers. But a thousand years had passed; the Inquisition abroad had existed for nearly two centuries, and now it was become a common thing in other parts of Europe to put to death for heresy. One remnant, indeed, was retained of the ancient practice: for whereas the fathers, when they delivered an offender to be corrected by the law of the land, were accustomed to entreat that his life might be spared, this entreaty still accompanied the sentence; but it became a mockery when those who passed the sentence knew and intended that their victim should be committed to the flames.

The first victim was William Sawtrey, a parish priest of St Osith's in London, who the year before had recanted in St. Margaret's church, at Lynn in Norfolk,

[1] *Church of the Fathers*, c. xxi. p. 408. COLLIER, i. 617.

of which he had been incumbent; but being now convened before the archbishop, and accused of preaching the same doctrines, at first denied the fact of his having recanted before, which being proved in court, he was pronounced a relapsed heretic, and having been solemnly degraded, was delivered to the civil power. The parliament was then sitting which had passed the law in question. The king's writ for his execution was immediately issued; and on the 26th of February, A.D. 1401, Smithfield beheld the first of those scenes of blood and fire for which it was to be fatally notorious.

The act of parliament[1], however, rendered it no longer necessary to await the king's writ. It was provided that whenever the bishop should see fit to proceed to a definitive sentence against a convicted or relapsed heretic, the mayor or sheriff of the place should attend; and having received the culprits at the hands of the ecclesiastical judge, should "*them in an high place do to be burned.*" Thus did Henry consent, for political purposes, to forego the noblest attribute of his new royalty—the attribute of mercy—depriving himself of the power, in matters of religion, which belongs to a sovereign in the case even of a common felon. And as he had already frustrated the loyal boast of his father, that "he would not be the first traitor of his race," so now was he the first to consign to a death of torture the adherents of that cause of which his father had been the patron.

Of the doctrines of which Sawtrey was accused, there was scarcely one which can be called so much as an error. They were simply these four: that it was not the duty of Christians to worship the cross of Christ, but Christ who suffered on the cross: that it would be fitter to worship a man predestinated to salvation than an angel of God; for our Saviour, he said, took upon him the nature of man, not of angels; but the Divine law allowed neither: that a man had better

[1] 2 Hen. IV. c. 15.

distribute the expenses of his journey to the poor at home, than go on any pilgrimage which he had vowed: and that a priest was more bound to preach to the people, than to say the daily hours of prayer. But on being examined, he also denied the doctrine of transubstantiation; and this denial probably was with him, as with all the martyrs in Queen Mary's days, the immediate cause of his cruel death.

Bitter and cruel were indeed the sufferings which followed from the enactment of this hateful law. It is true, that many of the bishops were still, in the fifteenth century, accused of slackness in the persecution; and it should be mentioned to their honour. But from time to time it broke out afresh, and none were ever safe who held the proscribed opinions. The prisons in the bishop's houses, which had been simply places of confinement, were now often provided with instruments of torture. The Lollard's tower at Lambeth still remains, long since converted to better uses, but with an apartment wisely preserved as a memorial of the past, retaining its iron rings and other signs of the captives whom it once immured. The bishop of Lincoln, at his palace at Woburn, and perhaps other bishops elsewhere, had a cell in his prison called *Little-Ease;* the name was given because it was so small, that those confined in it could neither stand upright nor lie at length. The same law which transferred to the Church the power of life and death, left still a discretion with the ordinary of fine and imprisonment; and frequently those convicted of heresy were doomed to the sentence formerly inflicted by the Church for homicide, of perpetual imprisonment within the walls of a monastery. It is possible that in such abodes they may have been sometimes the blessed instruments of imparting divine truth to the companions of their sojourn; but if we may judge of the feelings expressed towards them by Walsingham and other monks of the time, we may well imagine how, with such keepers, they ate and drank the bread and water of affliction. Others were branded

on the cheek with a hot iron, which, if they dared to hide, they were liable to be burnt as relapsed heretics; or they were condemned to wear the device of a faggot worked upon the sleeve of their clothing, in token of their narrow escape from burning.

It is a melancholy proof how hardly a received error in practice can be amended, even when the principles which led to it have been long discarded, when we recollect how long these persecuting laws remained a part of the jurisprudence of our country. When Henry VIII. began to break with the pope, he did indeed repeal this statute, but enacted another[1] by which heretics were still to be burnt, though not without the king's writ, while by his six articles he made all points of Romish doctrine to be as much secured by persecution as ever[2]. As the times of the Reformation approached, Erasmus began to plead for a mitigation of such horrors. "It may be," he said to the Duke of Saxony, "that open enemies of the principal articles of the faith deserve burning; but it is not just that every error should be punished with fire, unless he who maintains it is a seditious person, or guilty of other crimes, for which the laws exact a capital punishment[3]." On the accession of Edward all acts of parliament for burning heretics were repealed[4], but the common law still left the power to the king. Cranmer indeed seems to have designed to repeal the punishment of death in the code of ecclesiastical laws which he had just completed when King Edward died. But these laws were never ratified, and the best legal authorities in England still defended the practice. "As in case of a disease in the body, so in case of heresy, a disease of the soul," said Sir Edward Coke, "a relapse is fatal. And as a leper is to be removed from the society of men, lest he should infect them; so he that

[1] 25 Hen. VIII. c. 14.
[2] 31 Hen. VIII. c. 14.
[3] Epist. xxi. § 7, A.D. 1524.
[4] 1 Ed. VI. c. 12.

has the soul's leprosy, convicted of heresy, shall be cut off, lest he should poison others, by the king's writ *de hæretico comburendo*[1]." On such reasons the law was still retained; and a few unhappy persons, for denying the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, or other errors, were executed in the reigns of Elizabeth and James I. When the sectaries prevailed over the Church in Oliver Cromwell's time, the Independents put to death several Quakers. Calvin and Beza abroad taught and acted on the same principles. It was not till the excellent Jeremy Taylor and Chillingworth had taught the doctrine of toleration, that this practice was finally abolished in the reign of Charles II[2].

As might have been expected, the spirit of the Lollards was not extinguished, though it was embittered, by such proceedings. They were now almost excluded from the use of the churches, but they held their conventicles in secret; and, as the state had declared against them, they seem to have become less disposed to act the part of good subjects, and to have added more and more of political discontent to their religious opinions. The unsettled state of government, under a doubtful title, favoured this inclination to sedition. But as yet they had hopes from their friends in parliament. A party in the House of Commons were known as the Lollard members; and twice in this reign they presented a petition to the king (which was almost the same as passing a bill by the lower house) for the sequestration of all Church-property. The petition set forth, that this property would suffice to maintain 15 earls, 1500 knights, 6200 esquires, 100 almshouses, and would leave the king 20,000*l.* of yearly income besides; a most exaggerated calculation doubtless, at a time when the tenth paid by the Church did not amount in all to 19,000*l.* But the majority of the house assented to the petition, as in after-times under

[1] Coke, *Instit.*, part iii. c. 5. Collier, i. 616.
[2] 29 Car. II. c. 9.

Henry VIII. and Edward VI., in hope of sharing the plunder; and the statement itself breathes anything but a religious spirit, offering this kind of bribe to the king and nobles[1].

"King Bolingbroke," as Shakspeare calls him, was much changed in a few years from what he was at his first accession to the throne. His faithful clergy, who had been lately requested only to aid the cause of usurpation with their prayers, were now told that the contribution of a tenth was by no means enough to ensure his protection. They were to pay two-tenths in one year. He is said to have sent secret instructions to the high sheriffs of counties before the election of members, that they should take care to let the knights of the shires whom they returned be the most ignorant of law whom they could find[2]; in order that such proposals might be the more readily entertained. Whether the king seriously contemplated the seizure of Church-property, or whether he wished only to terrify the spiritual peers into a large contribution, the danger now seemed imminent. But Arundel showed a spirit equal to the emergency. Turning to Sir John Cheyne, the speaker of the House of Commons, a man who was in deacon's orders, but had left the Church for the army, and who had expressed his little value for the services of the priesthood: "I see," he said, "which way the wind sets; but while Canterbury lives, it will be at your peril, if you touch any goods or property of his." Then, kneeling before the king, he reminded him of his

---

[1] One portion of this petition is remarkable, as containing the first proposal for a poor-law, which was afterwards the offspring of the Reformation. It suggested that every township "should keep all poor people of their own dwellers, which could not labour for their living." And for the relief of those whom their own township could not maintain, because of their numbers, it proposed the foundation of so many endowed alms-houses. This suggestion seems to have been derived from John Purvy, a disciple of Wycliffe.

[2] WALSINGHAM.

coronation-oath, in which he had promised to maintain the Church and her ministers in all their rights and privileges. He spoke of the little profit that had accrued to the crown from the seizure of the alien priories and cells of Norman abbeys by Edward III., and represented, in language almost prophetic, the certain impoverishment of a kingdom which should resort to such means of plunder and spoliation. He had interest with the temporal lords, some of whom he had saved from forfeiture by pleading their cause with the king; and they joined him in his intercession. The king appeared to be moved, and said, "Whatever else I do, I will leave the Church in as good a state, or better than I found it." He was as good as his word, and never listened to these proposals afterwards.

It would have been well if this active primate had contented himself with repressing projects of this kind, so manifestly tending to public disorder. But having obtained this respite from danger, he determined with the utmost rigour to put down the growing heresy, which he looked upon as the root of the mischief. The memory of Wycliffe was still cherished at Oxford; and when this prelate proposed to visit the University, he was opposed on the plea that the pope had exempted it from his jurisdiction. When he afterwards, by help of the king's authority, was received as visitor, one of those whom he had appointed to examine the Reformer's writings, and detect the heretical opinions they contained, refused to act with the rest. However, in A.D. 1408, Arundel presided at a synod in Oxford, and, imitating the practice of the popes, laid down the constitutions to be received without debate. In these all Wycliffe's writings were condemned; and it was made heresy to possess any version of the Bible not authorised by the Church; which, as no translation received such sanction, was in effect to proscribe all English versions of the Word of God.

Two years later the University passed the same sentence, and committed the books of the Reformer to the

flames; but it did not pass without opposition, for his popularity was not yet forgotten there. Indeed, in A.D. 1406, some of his party had contrived to affix the common seal of the University to a testimonial highly praising him; which was afterwards published in Bohemia as if it had been the act of the University. This it certainly was not; nor is it any credit to those who resorted to such a trick: but it proves that the zeal of his followers was not by any means extinct[1].

Not content with these rigours against the writings of Wycliffe, Arundel applied to the pope for permission to burn his bones. But for once Rome was more merciful than Canterbury, and the permission was refused. It was reserved for the Council of Constance first to make this decree, A.D. 1415; and Martin V., elected pope by that council, sent an order into England for its execution. It was in A.D. 1428, nearly forty-four years after the death of Wycliffe, that his mouldering remains were taken up and committed to the flames by Fleming, bishop of Lincoln, who, like many others in these times of inconstancy, had in early life favoured the doctrines of the Reformer. The ashes were thrown into the little river Swift, which flows by Lutterworth, a tributary of the Avon; and, as a modern ballad harmonises a thought of Fuller's on the subject,

---

[1] The learned H. Wharton speaks of this testimonial as genuine. Lewis and Dr. Wordsworth also defend it. On the contrary, Collier, in one of his controversial pamphlets, calls it "no better than a beggar's pass made under a hedge." It professes to be the unanimous decision of the chancellor and masters, sets forth the virtues and learning of Wycliffe, and says that he had never been condemned or convicted of heresy. This was as yet true. But that the document had not the public or unanimous consent of the University, seems plain, from internal and external evidence. The first, because it is contrary to another authentic decision of the Oxford authorities, and has no signatures of names to it. The second, because a public declaration of the convocation of the province of Canterbury, A.D. 1411, states that it was a forgery, and the seal surreptitiously set to it. WILKINS, *Concil.*, iii. 336, iii. 302.

The Avon to the Severn ran,
The Severn to the sea;
So Wycliffe's dust was borne abroad
As wide as waters be.

The principle upon which Arundel seems to have proceeded, was one on which many persecutors have quieted the natural feelings of remorse. The Church had decided against such doctrine as Wycliffe taught, since the time of Innocent III. From the sentence of the Church there was no appeal; the Church itself would be destroyed, if its right to decide was called in question. Thus he dealt the same measure to high or low. John Badby, a poor artisan of Evesham, was sent up to him by the bishop of Worcester for refusing to abjure the Lollard opinion of the eucharist, and denying the authority of the priesthood. He asserted, says Walsingham, that the consecrated host was but an inanimate substance; and so of less account than a toad or spider, which are creatures endued with life[1]. He was condemned to be burnt in Smithfield. The Prince of Wales, afterwards Henry V., came to the place of execution, in hope to persuade him to recant and save his life. It was all in vain, nor was it likely to be otherwise; but it was a benevolent effort in the future hero of Agincourt, and he could hardly be expected, at the age of nineteen, to know the impotence of royal eloquence in such a case. It is uncertain how many similar executions took place in the lifetime of Henry IV.; but some other instances of compassion in his son, which have lately been brought to light, have made it evident that there were several more than have been recorded. For in the first year of Henry V. he granted a restoration of their forfeited property to the widows of four others, who had suffered for heresy before his own accession to the throne[2].

[1] This appears to be only Walsingham's illustration of his meaning. But Collier relates it as if the poor man had himself used such mean comparisons. See WALS., p. 378 and p. 570.

[2] TYLER'S *Life of Henry V.*, vol. ii. p. 413.

We have a more full account of the trial of William Thorpe, a Lollard clergyman, who fell twice into the hands of Arundel, both before and after the primate's banishment, but seems to have been able to commit to writing his own story of his examination[1]. It is one of the most interesting of the Lollard writings, and gives a clear account of the writer's notions, shared by many of the sect, upon many points of doctrine. Thorpe acknowledged no Church-authority which he would obey, unless he could perceive those who exercised it to have and use all Christian graces and virtues. He objected to an oath on the New Testament, because swearing by any book he thought to be swearing by a creature, or a thing composed of divers creatures. He thought that all musical instruments in churches were unlawful, and interpreted David, where he speaks of them, as meaning virtues and graces, wherewith men should please God and praise His name. "The letter killeth them that take such psalms literally," he said. Here we have something like three several errors of the Puritan, Quaker, and Independent, stated separately. Together with these, however, he held many sounder opinions, explained his belief on most points of the creed well, acknowledged the real presence of Christ in the eucharist, but denied any change of the substance of the bread, and disputed with some success against pilgrimages. He offended Arundel by another extravagance in declaring tithes unlawful, and saying that priests ought "to follow Christ and his apostles in

[1] Foxe says, "it is most like to be true, that he was so straitly kept in some strait prison, that either he was secretly made away, or else died there by sickness." But of this he brings no proof, but that Arundel was not likely to let him go, and that Thorpe was so valiant, that he was not likely to have retracted. The difficulty is, to imagine how he could have written such a paper in this strait confinement, reporting many things not very complimentarily to the archbishop, and how he could have sent it abroad afterwards.

wilful poverty." It is strange how on this point some of the Lollards seem to have been of the same mind with their opposites, the begging friars. It would not be fair to judge of the arguments of the archbishop, or his manner of discourse, from the report of this Lollard; it is garnished with oaths, and broken by impatience; and, as Sir Thomas More said of it, Thorpe has attributed to Arundel and his clerks such things as "none but a wild goose" would have said[1].

In such doctrines as these, however extravagant and inconvenient for the Church to tolerate, there was nothing of an immoral or seditious tendency. But there is reason to believe that the reforming party were now becoming more estranged from that religious simplicity which characterised their first proceedings. Sir Lewis Clifford, one of Wycliffe's first supporters, had become disgusted with some tenets which were now avowed, and denounced them to the archbishop. Among these are said to have been the following: that the marriage ceremony is unnecessary; that all public worship and receiving of the communion in churches ought to be discontinued, those churches being synagogues of Satan; that infants ought not to be baptised; and that neither the Lord's day nor the observance of other festivals are binding upon Christians[2]. It is said also that, on the accession of Henry V., they publicly declared that they were one hundred thousand strong, and would defend themselves by force against those who sought to restrain them.

But that which caused the greatest offence was, that certain knights and gentlemen continued to maintain the preachers of the new sect, and to send them about the country. Of those who persisted in this practice,

[1] See WORDSWORTH'S *Eccl. Biogr.*, i. 262, 3rd edition.

[2] WALSINGHAM, p. 366. Some doubt must rest on his statement, as we find nothing so atrocious in the Lollard tracts which have come down to us. But it is not probable that Sir Lewis Clifford, who was a religious man, would have denounced them, if he had not met with something to give him disgust.

the most conspicuous was Sir John Oldcastle, a knight of Herefordshire, who having married the heiress of Lord Cobham, of Cowling Castle near Rochester, had summons to parliament as Lord Cobham in right of his wife's barony. He was a man of influence and note, who had been employed in the public service both by Richard II. and Henry IV., and with whom the new king, Henry V., had contracted a personal intimacy on account of his military achievements, and whom he esteemed for his private worth and character. But he had adopted the opinions of Wycliffe; of which he declared, that "until he knew that despised doctrine, he had never abstained from sin;" and he adhered to them with a frank and resolute spirit. Immediately after the decrees of the Oxford synod, by which preaching without license was forbidden, the church of Cowling was put under an interdict, with several other churches in the diocese of Rochester, because a certain chaplain living with Lord Cobham had been allowed to preach there[1]; and now, in the year 1413, complaint was made in the convocation of the clergy that the same Lord Cobham maintained in his house preachers who had been convicted or suspected of heresy, and sent them about the neighbourhood to preach. It was related that he did this not only in Kent, but in the neighbourhood of his paternal estate in Herefordshire, and that he was accustomed to go himself to their preaching with his attendants, to countenance and protect them.

It was in vain that the bishops now decreed, not only that every church or churchyard where unlawful preaching was held should be placed under an interdict, but that wherever any such meetings were held within a parish, the church and churchyard of that parish should incur the like penalty[2]. Such an interdict was indeed a terrible punishment; for by it all Christian burial and marriage, as well as all the services of the Church, were withheld from all the parishioners. But it was evident

[1] WILKINS, *Conc.*, iii. 330. [2] Ibid., iii. 352.

that measures of a different kind were necessary with Cobham; for he had taken his resolution, and was prepared to abide the consequence. He was therefore denounced by name as a heretic; and the clergy in convocation demanded of the archbishop that he should proceed against him. The bishops having thought it best first to ask the king's permission, Henry desired them to defer the process until he should have tried the effect of his own persuasion with his friend. He sent for him to Windsor, and had several interviews with him; at one of which his answer is reported to have been in these words: "You, most worthy prince, I am always prompt and willing to obey, forasmuch as I know you a Christian king, and the appointed minister of God, bearing the sword to the punishment of evil-doers, and for safeguard of them that be virtuous; unto you, next my eternal God, owe I my whole obedience, and submit thereunto, as I have ever done, all that I have, either of fortune or nature, ready at all times to fulfil whatsoever ye shall in the Lord command me. But as touching the pope and his spirituality, I owe them neither suit nor service, forasmuch as I know him by the Scriptures to be the great antichrist, the son of perdition, the open adversary of God, and the abomination standing in the holy place."

Finding persuasion vain, the king permitted the archbishop to proceed according to the law. But Cobham resolved to set the ecclesiastic at defiance. He fortified his castle, and would admit no man to summon him. In vain Arundel appointed him a day to appear at Leeds Castle, then a palace of the archbishop's. In vain he caused the citation to be affixed to the doors of the cathedral of Rochester, three miles from Cowling Castle. The papers were torn down, and the authority of the bishop's court defied. In his absence, sentence of excommunication was pronounced against him; but the only result was to induce him to go again to the king, instead of the archbishop, and to deliver to him his confession of faith.

The most remarkable part of this confession is the definition it contains of holy Church, which he describes as being divided into three societies, of whom the first are in heaven; the second in purgatory, "if such place there be;" and the third are all good men on earth, of the several ranks of clergy, nobles, and commonalty; of whom he says, that "day and night they contend against the crafty assaults of the devil, the flattering prosperities of this world, and the rebellious filthiness of the flesh." Here was the same omission of any distinction between the visible and invisible Church, which has been before observed as one of the errors of the Lollards. For our Saviour describes the kingdom of heaven as a net cast into the sea *which gathered of every kind;* and the true doctrine is, that the Church on earth, in and by which the Lord will save his people, outwardly contains, until the Lord come, both bad and good. But Henry V. was no judge of controversy; he saw that his friend was resolved to oppose the laws and religion of his country, and he was determined to prevent him. He was only the more offended, when Cobham, who had previously offered, according to the strange practice of the times, to defend his opinions by wager of battle, now declared that he appealed from the archbishop to the pope. He sent him, therefore, a prisoner to the Tower, from whence he was brought before the archbishop, with whom sat the bishop of London and Cardinal Beaufort, bishop of Winchester, at the chapter-house of St. Paul's.

The archbishop having offered him absolution, if he would conform to the doctrine of the Church, Cobham delivered his written answer, which is preserved in the original English in the archbishop's register[1]. He declared that "he called Almighty God to witness that it had been and was his intent to believe faithfully and fully all the sacraments that ever God ordained in his Church. That as for the most worshipful sacrament of

[1] WILKINS, *Conc.*, iii. 354.

the altar, he believed it to be Christ's body in form of bread. As to penance, that it is needful to all who shall be saved to forsake sin, and to do penance for sin committed, with true confession, contrition, and satisfaction. As to images, he thought them not *of belief* (not a necessary part of faith); but ordained since the Christian faith was given, to be calendars to lewd men (that is, to ignorant or lay people), to represent and bring to mind the passion of our Lord, and the martyrdom and lives of saints; but that whoever should pay to them the worship due to God, or trust in them, or honour one image more than another, would be guilty of idolatry. And so of pilgrimage, that we all are pilgrims towards bliss or woe; and he that knoweth not nor will keep the holy law of God, though he go on pilgrimage to all the world, if he die so shall be damned; and he that keepeth it to the end shall be saved, though he never go on pilgrimage in his life to Canterbury or Rome."

This answer was not sufficient; and after in vain attempting to engage him in disputation on the points, they adjourned the court, and sent him in writing the substance of that faith to which they would require his assent. It was, "that in the sacrament of the altar the bread and wine are so turned by the priest's words into Christ's body and blood, that there remaineth no longer bread or wine; that every Christian is bound to confess to a priest; that St. Peter and his successors are the vicars of Christ on earth; and that it is meritorious to go on pilgrimages, and worship images and relics." After two days they met again at the house of the Black Friars, near Ludgate Hill, to receive his final answer; and it is due to his judges to say that they showed no desire to convict him, but used all means in their power to induce him to recant. But they had to deal with one of those gallant spirits, which rises against oppression and despises danger. At the first trial his conduct towards his judges had been such as not to provoke them wantonly. But now

he seems to have resolved to denounce them openly. The archbishop began by offering him absolution as before, if he would submit and confess to him; but he answered, "Nay, forsooth will I not; for I never yet trespassed against you, and therefore I will not do it." He then kneeled down on the pavement, and holding up his hands towards heaven, said, "I shrive me here unto Thee, my eternal living God, that in my frail youth I offended Thee, O Lord, most grievously, in pride, wrath, and gluttony, in covetousness, and in lechery. Many men have I hurt in mine anger, and done many horrible sins; good Lord, I ask Thee mercy." He arose in tears; and turning to the people who were present, "Lo, good people," he said, "for the breaking of God's law and his commandments they never yet cursed me, but for their own laws and traditions most cruelly do they handle me and others; and therefore both they and their laws, by the promise of God, shall be utterly destroyed[1]." Being questioned on the articles of faith which had been delivered to him, he again declared his belief, that in the sacrament of the altar is bread and Christ's body, but denied that it was the true doctrine of the Church that the bread is changed; "or if it be the Church-doctrine," said he, "it has become so since the Church was poisoned by endowments." He again admitted that it is good to confess to a good priest, but denied that it is a duty to confess to the parish priest in every case. As for images, he said he would pay no more honour even to the cross on which Christ was crucified, than to preserve it carefully; and as to the power of the keys, he declared that the pope himself with the archbishops and prelates are the head and tail of antichrist[2].

The court upon this proceeded to their final sentence,

---

[1] Foxe, from whom this account is taken, refers to Jer. li., the prophetic description of the destruction of Babylon.

[2] This is the account in the archbishop's register. Foxe is more particular; but he does not give his authority.

by which they declared Sir John Oldcastle, lord of Cobham, a convicted heretic, and delivered him as a heretic to the secular jurisdiction. All who should favour him were excommunicated and denounced; and it was ordered that these proceedings should be published in every church in England. By the law of Henry IV. the consequence of this sentence was death, though it was not the practice of the spiritual court to pronounce it. But though this new law had given authority to the secular magistrate to proceed at once to the execution of a person thus delivered over from the spiritual court, it does not appear that any such course had yet been taken without the king's writ. It is not likely that Henry V. would be forward to issue such a writ in the case of such a man; and it is said that Arundel himself interceded with the king to stay the execution. He was sent back to the Tower, and henceforth the history of this nobleman is as full of perplexity as it is of partial and exaggerated statements. Hitherto we have seen him boldly and manfully standing forth at the peril of his life in defence of principles which, though not unmixed with error, were founded upon precious and saving truths, too long forgotten or neglected. But now we have to thread our way through conflicting testimony, in order to determine whether the same Christian knight permitted himself to be goaded by persecution, or misled by enthusiasm, into deeds disgraceful to the Christian name.

What is certain is, that a short time after his conviction, in September, 1413, he escaped from the Tower (by what means was never known), and in January following the king had information on which he relied, that Cobham had conspired with twenty thousand of his party to seize his person and overthrow the government. Henry hastened to London from Eltham palace, ordered the gates of the city to be closed, and proceeding with his troops to St. Giles's Fields, where the insurgents were supposed to be assembling, dispersed some stragglers whom he found there, taking prisoners

Sir Roger Acton and Beverley, a Lollard preacher, who, with many others, thirty-six in all, were condemned and executed as traitors.

On the same day a royal proclamation was issued, offering an immense reward, a thousand marks, for the capture of Cobham himself, who was soon after outlawed by sentence of the judges. It was believed to be the intention of his party to make him regent of the kingdom; and it was said that one Morley, a brewer of Dunstaple, who suffered for treason, was to have been knighted by him on the field, made Duke of Hereford, and enriched with the sequestered estates of the abbey of St. Alban's. The parliament of the next year passed a law to sequester the estates of all convicted heretics, and the public opinion seems to have turned against the Lollards. Whenever any treason was brooding, it was now connected with rumours of Lollard insurrections; they were suspected of stirring up the Scotch invasion, which took place while Henry was in France, and of being connected with the conspiracy at Southampton, for which the Earl of Cambridge suffered; and at length, in December, 1417, Cobham himself was taken in Wales, after a desperate resistance. A standard was found, on which were depicted the emblems of the crucifixion and the consecrated elements, which was supposed to belong to him, and seemed to indicate an intention to carry on a religious war; and he was brought up wounded and a prisoner to London.

Henry was in France, following up his success in a second campaign after the battle of Agincourt. But the parliament was sitting, and Cobham was brought before it. Being asked what he had to say in arrest of judgment, he replied that "it was a small thing with him to be judged by them, or by man's judgment;" and being pressed for an explicit answer, he declared that King Richard was living in Scotland, and that he would own no tribunal, the authority of which was derived from any other source. On this he was sentenced to be hanged and burnt as a convicted heretic

and traitor; which horrible sentence was carried into effect in all its particulars. He was drawn on a hurdle through London streets from the Tower to a low gallows erected in St. Giles's Fields, on which his body was fastened horizontally in chains, and lighted faggots being placed beneath, he was thus burnt to death.

What were indeed the designs of Cobham and his party is matter of conjecture. That they had designs against the existing government was never questioned by the king, or by any contemporary historian; and it is remarkable that the same writer who takes pains to disprove the existence of any conspiracy, should hold up to admiration as a Christian hero the leader of the Bohemian insurgents, Ziska, who, almost at the same time, carried on a religious war against his lawful sovereign. Perhaps the truth may be, that the persecuting laws of the house of Lancaster led the Lollards to concur in the wish for a change of dynasty, of which so many symptoms had appeared in other quarters. The insurrections of Archbishop Scroop and of the Percys against Henry IV., as well as the conspiracy of the Earl of Cambridge against Henry V., all had reference to some change, which was not avowed, partly, perhaps, because the Earl of March did not declare himself; and partly because there was a strong belief that Richard was still alive. Whether the assembly in St. Giles's Fields was a real insurrection, may possibly be questioned; but that Cobham had some designs against the government at the time he was taken, admits of no reasonable doubt. The result, however, of these proceedings was fatal to the Lollard cause. The party, indeed, continued; but they had lost their credit and influence in the state, and dwindled into a despised and persecuted sect.

CHAPTER XI.

COUNCIL OF CONSTANCE. BISHOP HALLAM. PERSECUTIONS IN ENGLAND. BISHOP PEACOCK. WARS OF YORK AND LANCASTER.

At last
Of middle age one rising, eminent
In wise deport, spake much of right and wrong,
Of justice, of religion, truth, and peace,
And judgment from above: him old and young
Exploded, and had seized with violent hands.
So violence
Proceeded, and oppression, and sword-law.
MILTON.

THE Lollards were suppressed by degrees as a political party, but the desire for a Reformation was as strong as ever, and even more general than before. Long after they had ceased to be formidable to the state, the flame of persecution breaking out from time to time showed that the spirit of religious inquiry which Wycliffe had excited was not quenched. But it was not only with those who had adopted Wycliffe's religious opinions that this desire was to be found. Kings and nobles, even the clergy themselves, on different grounds and in different degrees, all concurred in deploring and in professing to desire to remedy the degraded condition of the Church. It was no longer indeed permitted, as it had been to Petrarch and Chaucer, to lash the vices of the clergy, or to hold up their failings to ridicule. But the bitterness which had now succeeded to indifference, showed an awakened sense of shame and consciousness of danger.

The most memorable event in the Church history of the reign of Henry V. was the termination of the

schism of the popes,—memorable for the restoration of a power which seemed ruined past recovery, and for the discouragement which it gave to the hopes of reformation. While the schism lasted, there was no great strength of attachment between the state of England and the pontiffs to whom the state adhered. These pontiffs were often in great distress from wars and factions at home; but they feared to levy contributions abroad, lest they should provoke their friends to transfer allegiance to their rivals. Hence they were driven to more pitiful expedients; new festivals were added to a calendar already swollen with days of idleness and superstition; new privileges were granted to monastic and collegiate churches; and the friars busily plied their private trade in papal charters for the comfort of their attendants at the confessional. The fourteenth century had witnessed the addition of many new holy-days, as All Souls after All Saints, the Conception of the Blessed Virgin, and Corpus Christi, a high day for plays and processions. Now Boniface IX., in A.D. 1392, instituted the Salutation of Mary and Elizabeth, "cram-full of indulgences," as Walsingham says, for those who should observe it; and Arundel obtained his sanction to raise St. Dunstan's and St. George's days to the rank of the greater festivals; an honour not allowed in all cases to the memory of the Apostles[1]. Now the monks of Bury procured some special indulgences for their shrine of St. Edmund; and those of Ely and Norwich, full absolution for all who should come and confess themselves at their churches in Trinity week. And while the fires of Smithfield were burning the unhappy Lollards, the canons of St. Bartholomew hard by were advertising their new privileges of pardons for the devout who were guilty of any crime short of heresy.

[1] After the battle of Agincourt, the English Church ordained St. Crispin's day, October 25, to be observed as a greater festival throughout the realm.

In the meantime the protection of a pope of doubtful title had very little power in England. Henry IV., soon after his elevation, had put to death eight or nine friars on a charge of treason. He had sentenced Archbishop Scroop to the same fate, without even allowing him a trial by his peers. The abbot of Hayles and other abbots, priests, and monks, were either beheaded, or imprisoned and visited with other punishments, to strike terror into the opponents of his power. And though a bull of excommunication came from Rome against the slayers of the archbishop, and his friends tried to make a martyr of him, these efforts had very little success. It is remarked that Archbishop Scroop was the first prelate who was tried by a lay tribunal since the time of King John. However just or unjust were these sentences,—and they appear to have been often attended with circumstances of great barbarity,—they are a proof that this monarch did not think the Lollards the only dangerous subjects he had. And they must have taught the Church a bitter lesson for her breach of faith, and credence to the promises of an usurper.

The schism had now continued nearly forty years, and with little mitigation of the disorders in which it had begun. In the beginning of this century a general council had been convened at Pisa, by which a sentence of deposition had been passed against the two rival popes, and a third, Alexander V., elected in their place, who, dying shortly after, was succeeded by John XXIII. But as the other two refused to resign, the only result of this measure was that there were three prelates at once, each calling himself the pope, and claiming to be the vicegerent of Christ on earth. In this state of things another council met at Constance in Switzerland, A.D. 1415, with the double object of promoting unity and putting down heresy. Some Bohemians who had come into England with the queen of Richard II., had carried back the doctrines of Wycliffe with them. And they were joined by some English clergymen, particu-

larly one Peter Payne, who is accused of having got up the Oxford testimonial in favour of Wycliffe[1]. John Huss, a teacher at the University of Prague, of high character for learning and private worth, had imbibed some of these opinions, and publicly maintained them in his lectures. He had before given offence by other tenets, which touched the national prejudices of the German students; and this new announcement was made the signal for his prosecution. When the council met at Constance, he was summoned to appear; and he was persuaded to come, under the guarantee of a safe-conduct from the Emperor Sigismund. The violation of this safe conduct is one of the most disgraceful acts recorded in history. He was seized and imprisoned; the remonstrances of his friends to the council, and their appeals to the prince, were equally vain. The emperor is said to have declared that he would have saved him if he could; but here, as in England, unknown and irresponsible persons were able to prevail, and truth and honour, not to say justice and pity, were overborne. Huss was required to recant a set of opinions which he declared he had never held; and though he protested that he was willing to submit to the council, and only desired that he might not be forced to offend God and his conscience, by saying he had professed those errors which it was never in his mind to profess, he was condemned to the stake, and burnt A.D. 1416. His friend and associate, Jerome of Prague, who had come to the council of his own accord, was also seized; and though he at first recanted, being brought up again and withdrawing his recantation, he was made soon after to share the same fate.

Another culprit, of higher rank, was accused before the same council, and was for a time the inmate of the

---

[1] Bale says that Lord Cobham caused Wycliffe's writings to be copied out by fair writers, and conveyed them himself into Bohemia. It is possible he might have gone to that country on some state mission; but the fact does not appear.

same prison with John Huss. This was Pope John XXIII., whose title to the see was maintained by the assembled prelates against his two rivals, Gregory XII. and Benedict XIII., but whose enormous crimes confessed, as it would appear, by himself, rendered him not so unfit to govern as unfit to live. This miserable man, fearing sentence of deposition by the council, after many dishonest artifices, resigned the popedom; but instead of being punished, as his deeds amply merited, with death or perpetual imprisonment, he was set at liberty, and restored to the rank of cardinal, which he held as long as he lived. It was so much safer, in these unhappy times, for a man to break every precept of the decalogue, than to raise his voice against the corrupt doctrines by which such transgressions grew.

It is pleasing to be able to trace any character of better temper, and with any degree of zeal for truth, in such an assembly. And this praise seems due to Robert Hallam, bishop of Salisbury, one of the English representatives both at the council of Pisa and at Constance, equally celebrated for his eloquence, and for his earnest endeavours to terminate the schism. When Jerome of Prague was brought up for his first examination, and had given offence by one of his answers, so that several of the doctors called out, "To the fire with him!" the accused answered with some emotion, "If my death is what you seek, God's will be done." Hallam took up his words: "No, Jerome," he said, "it is not God's will that any sinner should die, but that he should be converted and live." It would seem by this speech that he had more mercy in his soul than the majority in that assembly. He died before the conclusion of the council, and it seems that his death had taken place before the execution of Huss, for he was not present at the next session after that where this occurred[1]. He distinguished himself by the boldness and

[1] April 25, 1415. L'Enfant, *Conc. de Constance.*

resolution with which he enforced the council to prosecute the pope, saying to a prelate who defended him, that he knew, if he would speak the truth, that the man deserved a hundred deaths. And he brought with him to Pisa and Constance a good plan for reformation, drawn up by his friend Richard Ullerston, an Oxford man, an opponent of the Lollards, but very desirous to recover the Church from its abuses in discipline. This tract contained sixteen articles; and among the things to be reformed were—the mode of electing popes, the simony practised in preferments, the appropriation of churches to monasteries, exemptions from bishops' jurisdiction, papal dispensations, appeals to Rome, abuses of privileges, employments of clergy in worldly offices, and generally the extortions of church-courts, officers, summoners, and other agents. "Let the popes," he said, "keep within the bounds of their spiritual ministry. Let things be brought into their natural order, and let abuses be cut off. Let the pope employ himself as befits his charge, in promoting peace among Christians, in preaching the Gospel himself, and sending everywhere good preachers, to teach, both by their doctrine and example, to princes and people, their different duties, and to make a *holy war* against those passions, which are, as St. James says, the source of wars and divisions in Church and State." We see in these articles most of the evils of which the Lollards complained, admitted to exist by one who was not their friend. Hallam seems to have laboured zealously, in concert with the Emperor Sigismund, to effect this reformation; but his death interfered: the other English deputies had not the same spirit; and all the plans of reformation were defeated by the election of Martin V. to the papal chair, with whose election the schism of the popes was also terminated.

To return to England. Arundel dying in A.D. 1413, was succeeded by Chicheley, a man of great abilities as a statesman, of great probity in his bishop's office, and of munificent charity; but the persecution continued.

In A.D. 1415, John Claydon and George Gurmyn were burnt for heretics[1]; and several others, among whom were many clergymen, were forced to recant. The circumstances connected with Claydon's trial, as well as with that of a clergyman named Taylor, are remarkable as illustrating the social miseries, jealousies, and distractions introduced by these unhappy laws, and also the way in which persecuting principles once admitted, may plunge men in crimes even against their will. It is plain that the bishops would often have spared their victims, had they dared to withstand the clamour of inferior persons. In A.D. 1414, the University of Oxford published certain "Articles concerning the Reformation of the Church[2]," which had been drawn up, as they declare, by the king's express command. For Henry V., though he adhered to all the dictates of the Church, was resolutely bent on the reformation of its abuses; and is said to have declared, that if the bishops would not reform them, he would take the matter into his own hands. These articles are exceedingly important, as it is from such documents that we collect the most authentic and least suspicious testimony as to the real condition of the Church. But unfortunately there was one of their proposals, which was the most readily adopted and the most fatal to a true reformation. This was, "that any bishop who should be remiss in purging his diocese of heretics should be deposed; that civil officers should take an oath to aid the bishops against them, and that all their books and translations should be put down by law, until proper translations should be made." This probably gave rise to the act of parliament of the same year[3], requiring all civil officers to take such an oath as this, and declaring the forfeiture of all the property of heretics. We see

---

[1] Foxe calls one of these men Richard Turming; but Mr. Tyler has found the name in the Pipe-Rolls. (Vol. ii. 394.)

[2] *Concil.* iii. 306, ex MS. C.C.C. Oxon.

[3] 2 Henry V. c. 7.

here the miserable alternative to which the bishops were reduced. They must persecute to the death, or be themselves denounced. Even when they deferred the trial of Sir John Oldcastle until they should consult the king, the announcement was received with murmurs. And, probably it was this same pressure of perhaps a few malicious spirits which led to the cruel constitutions which bear the name of Archbishop Chicheley, in 1416[1]. By these it was ordained that the bishops should twice a year cause inquiry to be made for heretics in every rural deanery; and that in every parish where any were suspected, three or four persons should be sworn to denounce all who should be known to read suspicious books in English, or to hold private meetings; and those who were thus denounced might be consigned to perpetual imprisonment, or brought before the convocation to choose between recantation and the stake. Thus was a kind of inquisition set up in every parish, and almost in every family; and it is sad to think what a system of mutual mistrust, and what an engine of private malice, would thus be set in motion.

It was after the passing of the act of parliament just mentioned, but the year before the publication of these constitutions, that John Claydon was brought before the bishops by the lord mayor, who doubtless had taken the oath which that law required. Claydon was a tradesman in St. Martin's Lane; and it appears, from the record of his trial, that he had for twenty years been a known follower of Wycliffe, had been twice imprisoned—the first time for two years, and then again for three more; after which he recanted; and to those who had once recanted the law left no escape in case of a second conviction. Three of his apprentices were called in evidence against him, one of whom had left him, and had gone to live with the lord mayor. The lord mayor had by these means become acquainted with his habits, and had apprehended him

[1] *Conc.* iii. 378.

and searched his dwelling; and thus were the members of his own household dragged forth to witness against him. They deposed that two of his friends, with a man who had transcribed his favourite book, *The Lantern of Light*, used to assemble with him to hear it read by another of his servants, and that he expressed his approbation and delight in it. One Sunday, the transcriber and the reader were occupied with him from eight in the morning until dusk in correcting the book, and reading parts of it, when it was first transcribed. The chief articles extracted from this book, by a committee appointed to examine it, were, that the pope is antichrist, and that true and faithful priests may preach in spite of the bishops, and without their license. There was an unfairness in these extracts; for the pope, with his "false laws," is there called only one of many antichrists, and the bishops are complained of as hindering all preaching, rather than their authority denied. A less partial censure would have found, what was indeed clear from the evidence, that the book contained other things. For one of the servants remembered to have heard the ten commandments read from it in English, and another said that it contained "the great commandment of our Lord Jesus Christ[1]." There was no escape—no place for pity—no room for recantation. Betrayed by those who had eat his bread —convicted of spending the Lord's day in reading a religious book with his family and friends—and of returning to such practices after having once recanted, —the poor man was delivered over to the secular arm, and committed to the flames.

But this account reveals to us the nature of those

---

[1] The *Lantern of Light* has its title from the text, Psalm cxix. 105. It has been printed, either the whole or in part, more than once, and contains much excellent matter, mixed with such bitterness as persecution creates in the minds of those who suffer by it. Claydon said he heard a good part of in a sermon preached at Horsleydown, in Southwark.

"conventicles and schools" which this persecuted people were accused of holding:—a tradesman and his servants, with a transcriber and a reader, for he could not read himself, and two friends,—eight or nine persons at the most,—listening to a religious book read to them in his own house. Such meetings could not be held for the purpose of preaching; and the preaching which they frequented was that of clergymen who had adopted their sentiments, and having done so, preached sometimes in churches or chapels, sometimes in churchyards or in the woods, but certainly not often, if at all, without having been ordained by the bishops[1]. It was in consequence of such preaching having been held there, that the church and churchyard of Cowling, and several others in Lord Cobham's neighbourhood, were placed under an interdict; so that the daughter of Lady Cobham, by a former husband, could not be married there until it was removed.

The trial of William Taylor, a clergyman, originally of Quorn, in Leicestershire, further illustrates the hateful system of private information which was now introduced. He was first brought before the convocation in 1419, three years after Chicheley's inquisitorial canon, where he abjured and promised to conform. The next year he was again accused of holding heretical opinions at Bristol, and was sentenced to perpetual imprisonment; but Chicheley availed himself of an appearance of contrition to obtain a mitigation of his sentence, and he was liberated on bail. It does not appear that he preached any more; but a year had hardly passed, when he was again put upon his trial,

---

[1] Walsingham says, that Claydon had made his own son a priest. Nothing of this appears in the record of his trial, which is preserved at great length in Chicheley's register. It seems to have been a practice with their opponents to call the Lollard clergymen "pretended priests," or "pseudo-presbyters;" for these names are given to Sawtrey, Swinderby, and others, who were certainly ordained.

and the evidence now produced was a letter he had written to a brother clergyman, a priest at Bristol, of the name of Smyth; in which he showed from Scripture and the fathers, that we ought to pray to God only, and not to saints. Whether Smyth betrayed him, or by what process his letter fell into the hands of his enemies, does not appear. But it was enough; former offences were now afresh brought up against him, and his life was forfeited to a system more lenient, as we have seen by what passed at Constance, to every imaginable vice, than to the discussion of divine things, or the investigation of the truth.

There is no need to multiply instances. Enough has been already said to show that there were numbers, both among the clergy and people, who had imbibed the love of better things. And the same proofs were still afforded, after the early death of Henry V., and during the long minority of his unfortunate son, till the civil war broke out. In A.D. 1428, Garenter, a priest of London, and Monk, of Melton Mowbray, were brought to a recantation; and White, another priest, was burnt at Norwich. But the most remarkable instance, proving how the principle of persecution, once admitted, may involve its abettors in crimes they would fain avoid, is to be found in the fate of Reginald Peacock, one of the most enlightened defenders of the system which was turned to the ruin of himself. Peacock had been in early life distinguished by the patronage of Humphrey, duke of Gloucester, a virtuous and learned prince, whose foul murder prepared the way to all the civil discord and savage warfare, in which the house of Lancaster was overthrown. By his influence he appears to have been appointed, in A.D. 1444, bishop of St. Asaph. Being a man of genius and learning, a skilful logician and eloquent in discourse, he was dissatisfied with the common method taken against the reforming party; and expressed his opinion, that "the clergy would be condemned at the last day, if they did not draw men into consent to the

true faith, otherwise than by fire and sword or hanging." He therefore began to put out tracts in English, in which he aimed to convince the people, that some of their complaints against the Church were unreasonable, and tried to mitigate their violence by palliating those neglects which were but too manifest. With this view, he argued in a sermon at St. Paul's Cross, A.D. 1447, that the bishops may be excused from residence and from preaching, on the ground that they have higher duties in the superintendence and government of the Church. And in pursuance of the same object, he published, in A.D. 1449, a book called the *Repressor*, in which he argued against the Lollard notion, that the Bible is the only rule for human conduct in every case, by showing, very truly, that reason is in some things before Scripture, and Scripture grounded upon it. As usual in such cases, his attempt to appease the clamour against the Church, by abstract reasoning, was wholly unsuccessful; while it raised suspicions against himself among the clergy, that he should appeal to the people's judgment on such deep questions, and argue them in their language.

In the mean time, public events tended to increase these suspicions. The people, by whom Duke Humphrey was much beloved, began to rise in tumults after his death; and two prelates, who had held offices about the court, fell victims to their resentment. Adam Molins, bishop of Chichester, was murdered by a party of sailors at Portsmouth; and Ayscough, of Salisbury, the king's confessor, was dragged from his church, and put to death, with circumstances of great barbarity, by the country-people of his diocese. It might be with a view of appeasing the popular indignation, that Peacock, as a friend of the duke whom they deplored, was transferred, in A.D. 1449, to the vacant see of Chichester; where he still continued his attempts to bring over the Lollards by argument rather than by persecution. Among other books, he wrote *A Treatise of Faith*, in which, not insisting on the infallibility of the Church,

he tried to persuade them, that it is reasonable to take for granted received opinions until they are disproved; and admitted, that though the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and the people should seek instruction from his mouth, yet neither pope nor council can add an article to the creed, or change one that is received, inasmuch as holy Scripture is the only ground of faith. This was too much for the party then ruling in the Church; and several doctors of both universities undertook to refute him. The bishops, however, were not at all forward to proceed against one of themselves, who had thus stood forth in their defence; and it is probable that no further notice would have been taken of him, had he not, by some means not sufficiently explained, incurred the displeasure of the king and the Lancastrian nobility, It seems they suspected him, as other friends of Duke Humphrey were suspected, of favouring the Yorkists. He was expelled the House of Lords, and the bishops were ordered to procced against him. It was in vain that he desired his books might be examined by competent persons. They were delivered to a committee, to extract from them what they pleased; and the only alternative in such cases was to recant whatever they might collect from their writings, or to be consigned to the stake. He was accused of maintaining that our Lord's descent into hell, and the belief in the Holy Spirit and in the catholic Church, are not necessary articles of the creed; and that the universal Church may sometimes err in points of faith. The last point he had admitted; but as for the three former, he had indeed said, and truly, that the article of the descent into hell was not in the most ancient copies of the creed; and that, though we ought to believe the holy catholic Church, we ought not to say we believe *in* the Church, in the same way as we believe in God. But as to the belief in the Holy Ghost, no vestige of a doubt upon that point exists in his writings that remain; and it has been remarked, that the archbishop, Thomas Bourchier, him-

self, omitted this point in summing up the charges against him[1].

It was no matter; he must recant these opinions precisely in the words in which his judges chose to clothe them, if he would save his life; and he consented to do so. He was brought to St. Paul's Cross, A.D. 1457, where twelve years before he had stood forth in defence of the abuses of that system by which he was thus requited, and there, in the presence, it is said, of 20,000 people, he acknowledged himself a miserable sinner, who, trusting to natural reason rather than to the Old and New Testament, and the authority of our mother, holy Church, had held and written heresies and errors. Wherefore he exhorted no man to give credence to what he had before written, but to bring his books to be burnt[2]. Upon this, several of his writings were committed to the flames in his presence; and having afterwards attempted to obtain the interest of the pope for restoration of his see, it seems that the statute of *præmunire* was put in force against him, and he was consigned to perpetual imprisonment in Thorney Abbey.

But events were now at hand which cast for a while into the shade all minor differences, in that terrible civil war, which has rendered the latter part of the fifteenth century a mournful page in English annals. There was little leisure for religious differences when every heart was set and every nerve was strained in the murderous conflicts between the houses of York and Lancaster. At length, when peace was restored, on the accession of Henry VII., A.D. 1485, the religious principles of the reforming party appear to have been more deeply rooted than ever in the minds of great numbers of the people. And this brings us to the proper place for inquiring what was the actual condition of the Church on the eve of that period, which, in the course of Divine Providence, was destined for its reformation.

---

[1] LEWIS's *Life of Peacock*. [2] *Concil.* iii. 576.

CHAPTER XII.

THE CHURCH IN THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY. SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES FOUNDED. DECLINE AND VICES OF MONASTERIES.

> Yet still some aged ones are found, in whom
> The old time chides the new; they think it long
> Ere God remove them to a better world.
>
> DANTE.

EVER since the time of Wycliffe, there had been two parties, each of whom was sincerely desirous of a reformation in the Church. Of the opinions of the followers of Wycliffe, and their views of reformation, some account has been given, as well as of their sufferings in consequence. But there was all the while a numerous class of persons differing entirely from them in their religious views, who were keenly alive to the abuses in the Church, and anxious to see them redressed. It is from the attempts made to redress them from time to time, that we obtain the most authentic and least suspicious testimony to the actual condition of the Church. In the investigation of which testimony we should bear in mind, that these abuses were regretted by good men of all shades of religious opinion, and that in the parties to which they severally adhered, something might still be found to commend as well as something to blame on either side. Wycliffe, indeed, was far beyond his day, and sowed the seeds of precious and saving truths. But the general spirit of discontent, which at that time was brooding in the minds of the people, mingled itself too much with the opinions of his followers. On the other side were some men of primitive virtue, whose love of order and obedience led them to cling to the religious system which they found, but whose hearts were deeply imbued with a

spirit of Christianity[1]. William of Wykeham was among the bishops engaged in suppressing Wycliffe's opinions, and William of Wainfleet was one of the judges of Bishop Peacock. Yet these illustrious men were laying a sure foundation for the revival of religious truth, in the colleges which they endowed, and were examples, in their own persons, of ancient simplicity and charity. The motives which induced the former of these prelates to devote his wealth to the foundation of a college rather than the erection of a monastery, are recorded by himself: "Having long resolved to dispose of the wealth which the Divine Providence had abundantly bestowed upon him to some charitable use for the public good, he was embarrassed when he came to fix his mind upon some design that was likely to prove most beneficial, and least liable to abuse. On this occasion he examined the various rules of the religious orders, and compared with them the lives of their several professors; but was obliged with grief to declare, that he could not any where find that the ordinances of their founders, according to their true design and intention, were at present observed by any of them. This reflection affected him greatly, and inclined him to take the resolution of distributing his riches to the poor with his own hands, rather than to employ them in establishing an institution which might become a snare and an occasion of guilt to those for whose benefit it should be designed. After much deliberation, and devout invocation of the Divine assistance, considering how greatly the number of the clergy had been of late reduced by wars and pestilence, he determined to endeavour to remedy, as far as he was able, this desolation of the Church, by relieving poor scholars in their clerical education, and to establish two colleges

---

[1] See CHURTON'S *Early English Church*, pp. 375, 376, 2d edition.

of students, for the honour of God and increase of his worship, for the support and exaltation of the Christian faith, and for the improvement of liberal arts and sciences[1]." In pursuance of this design, he established, about A.D. 1379, his two colleges at Winchester and Oxford, which became, as it were, the commencement of a new era in religious foundations. Among the most conspicuous of his followers were Archbishop Chicheley, who had been educated at his colleges, and who became the founder first of St. Bernard's College, now St. John's, and then, in 1438, of All Souls'; and William of Wainfleet, bishop also of Winchester, who, following the same example, founded Magdalen College in 1458[2]. Nor was the benefit of this example confined to Oxford. It was exactly followed by Henry VI., when he fulfilled his father's intention as to the disposal of the alien priories, by the foundation of King's College at Cambridge, and Eton, the nursery of the youth of England,

> Where grateful Science still adores
> Her Henry's holy shade.

The acts of other founders during this period fully confirm the testimony of William of Wykeham as to the degeneracy of the monasteries. The earliest instance of one of these foundations being given to a college, after the alien priories, is that of Selborne Priory, Hants, which being entirely dilapidated by the misconduct of its inmates, and in the end forsaken by both prior and canons, was bestowed by Wainfleet, with the consent of the crown and Pope Innocent VIII.,

---

[1] Bp. Lowth's *Life of Wykeham*, pp. 91, 92.

[2] On the mention of the honoured name of William of Wainfleet, the writer would beg to be permitted to adopt, *pro hac vice*, the words of Foxe, who, like himself, was indebted to that good man's bounty: "For which foundation, as there have been, and be yet, many students bound to yield grateful thanks to God, so must I needs confess myself to be one, except I be unkind," —*i. e. unnatural.*

on his newly founded Magdalen College[1]. Smyth, bishop of Lincoln, a few years later, converted the friary and another religious house at Lichfield into a hospital and grammar-school; and purchased a decayed priory at Cold Norton for his foundation at Brasenose. The colleges founded by Margaret, countess of Richmond[2], the mother of Henry VII., were partly endowed out of several decayed monasteries, ruined by the profligate and dissolute lives of the inhabitants; so that the worthy Bishop Fisher, a good and upright man, though no friend to the reformed doctrines, took an active part in their suppression[3]. He showed that the brethren of the Hospital of St. John, out of which St. John's College was erected, "had ruined themselves by their lust and riot, sold their plate, mortgaged their lands, and now were wandering abroad subsisting as they might, in total neglect of divine service and of all their other duties." A part of the same foundation was the nunnery of St. Rhadegund, near Cambridge, which was in an equally deplorable condition. It is mentioned that the nuns had become notoriously profligate, and their house was fallen to decay. And two other nunneries, Higham and Bromehall, were, for the same reasons, afterwards devoted to the like purpose.

In the last year of his reign, Henry V. had issued injunctions for the reformation of monasteries, with directions evidently pointing out the decay of moral

---

[1] In A.D. 1484. WHITE'S *Selborne*, pt. ii. lett. 24.

[2] St. John's and Christ's Colleges at Cambridge.

[3] STEPHEN'S *Appendix to Dugdale*, vol. ii. HYMERS' *Account of Lady Margaret*, p. 13. When Fox, bishop of Winchester, was deliberating about the disposal of his wealth, at the beginning of Henry VIII.'s reign, and thought of founding a monastery, his friend Hugh Oldham, bishop of Exeter, said to him, "Beware of what you do: the monks have already more than they will be able to keep." He took his advice, and founded Corpus Christi College, Oxford, to which Oldham contributed, A.D. 1516.

discipline and the license prevalent in many places. This led to the assembling of a general chapter of the Benedictine abbeys, the most respectable, as well as the most ancient and well-endowed of these foundations; and they made some partial reforms. And it seems to have been mercifully provided, that they should have remained through the thirty years of civil war, to mitigate in some degree the horrors of that time. For even in those cruel days the rights of the greater sanctuaries were in some degree respected; and the blood-stained Richard III., though he set guards round Westminster Abbey to prevent all escape or access of friends to the daughters of Edward IV., who had been placed in refuge there, did not dare to invade that sacred barrier[1].

When peace was at length restored, and the rival roses united by the marriage of Henry VII. with Elizabeth of York, we do not find that the condition of these houses was improved. On the contrary, Innocent VIII., in a bull of A.D. 1489, addressed to Archbishop Morton, recites in particular of the Cluniacs, Cistertians, and other later orders, that their ancient rules had been abandoned, and in many instances the inmates of these walls were living like persons given up to a reprobate sense, who had cast off the fear of God and regard for the opinion of men. By this bull he gave power to this primate, who was a man of the most upright character, well proved in evil times, to break through all exemptions, and visit all monasteries, with liberty to punish all delinquents, and especially those who had broken their vows. Thus furnished, the cardinal archbishop proceeded, in the first place, to the visitation of the Benedictine abbey of St. Alban's.

This abbey was one of the most ancient and best repute, as we have already seen, in all England. Its

---

[1] *Hist. of Croyland*, contin. p. 567.

revenues were princely, producing at this time between 2000*l.* and 3000*l.* a year; and the property which had once belonged to it was estimated, two centuries after the dissolution, at the annual value of 200,000*l*[1]. The abbot had episcopal jurisdiction over all the churches in the patronage of the abbey; he was lord paramount of the town of St. Alban's, appointed justices of the peace, had his own gaol-delivery, and was a lord of parliament. The historical and religious recollections of the place had marked it out for distinction among the British churches; and one cannot but concur with Archbishop Morton in lamenting that the seat of such sacred memorials should ever have been so disgraced. It would seem that the records of the abbey have omitted the name of the person under whose presidency these disorders occurred; for they take no notice of an interval between the death of Abbot Wallingford, in A.D. 1484, and the installation of Thomas Ramridge, in A.D. 1492; of whom it is related, that he was a pious and religious man, and that his name was celebrated for his good works to posterity[2]. But in this interval, in A.D. 1489, the abbot was charged with almost every abuse that he could be guilty of in a station where he had this great command of wealth and power,—simony in disposing of his preferment, dilapidation in selling off the old oaks and profitable timber to the value of eight thousand marks, neglect of divine service, giving license to all the members of his society who chose to live viciously, and persecuting with hatred those who would have kept their rule. He further complains that in consequence of his conduct his monks are given up to all kinds of sin, the divine service almost wholly neglected, and those who were inclined to live religiously persecuted and hated. Besides this, such was the old jurisdiction of these abbeys, there were in the

[1] WEEVER, *Funeral Monuments.*

[2] STEPHENS, *Supplement to Dugdale*, i. 264.

neighbourhood of St. Albans two nunneries subject to the abbot as visitor. It was laid to the charge of this man, that he had removed all the religious women out of these houses, that his monks were in the habit of publicly visiting those who remained; and he had himself appointed as prioress of the nunnery of Delapré a married woman, whose name is given, who had long been separated from her husband, and was living in adultery[1]. These charges appear to have been proved before the archbishop; and they relate to the discipline of one of the chief abbeys in the kingdom. They prove indisputably the effects produced by those papal exemptions, which these religious orders had so eagerly purchased; and such proofs might be multiplied from other records of the like judicial and solemn process. They prove that the corruption in morals was not, as some would make us believe, a fiction of Lollard libels or Protestant histories; but one that should convey its lesson to all surviving generations,

> To teach us that God attributes to place
> No sanctity, if none be thither brought
> By men who there frequent, or therein dwell.

At the same time, therefore, that we receive with distrust some of the particulars reported by Henry VIII.'s visitors, we may see evidence enough in memorials taken before the dissolution was thought of, and in the acts of such men as Wainfleet and Fisher, to prove that some great moral change was considered desirable by the wisest and most moderate men of the fifteenth century. The report of the antiquary Leland is equally unfavourable against the learning of these houses. It is true, that after the invention of printing, the abbeys of Glastonbury, Westminster, St. Alban's, and Tavistock, established printing-presses; but they appear to have found little occupation for them. The scribes that were employed in the great abbeys in

---

[1] WILKINS, *Concil.* iii. 630, 32, A.D. 1489, 90, Hen. VII. 5, 6.

copying manuscripts, now were generally discontinued; and the manuscripts themselves were perishing by neglect. Dust and damp were obliterating the stores of past ages; and it is probable that, had the monasteries been spared, they would have left decay to do the work which was afterwards done with more heat and haste in the disorders of the Reformation[1].

There were certainly many of these houses which were to the last assiduous in their religious services, exercising hospitality and charity on a large scale, and maintaining a good number of scholars in their schools and at the universities. The preamble of the act of Henry VIII. for dissolving the smaller monasteries bore witness that religion was well observed and kept up in the greater[2]. Even the visitors appointed under that act found several which they reported as conducted in the most exemplary manner. And if we look to facts, we find no instance in which these monks were convicted or punished for the crimes laid to their charge. Our evidence of the state of these houses, therefore, is not taken from the popular reports at the time of their suppression, but from records and historical memoirs written before they were suppressed, and by persons who harboured no intention to suppress them. There is quite enough to show that the time when they had been good schools of religious discipline was past; and as their numbers fell off, and public opinion shifted against them, they did not take warning. Gross delinquencies among them were of no uncommon occurrence; vices were indulged which naturally flow from "pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness," and these both in the sons and daughters of the monastic system[3].

---

[1] Leland and Gascoigne, quoted by Bale.

[2] 27 Hen. VIII., c. 28.

[3] The nunnery of Rumsey in Hampshire was founded by Edward the Elder, and enlarged by King Edgar in the tenth century. It was one of the richest in the kingdom, endowed

These vices were probably still more frequent among the friars, whose discipline was such as to subject them to less restraint. It is on record that a Franciscan, in A.D. 1424, had the effrontery to preach in St. Mary's Church, in Stamford, that incontinence in a member of a religious order is no mortal sin. He was, indeed, cited before the convocation, and compelled to retract, in the same church; but the fact points out something of the state of morals, which occasioned him to hazard such a public declaration.

Nor ought we to forget that these places were, as they were justly considered by many of the reformers, the nurseries of corrupt superstition. And it is superstition which is the stronghold of intolerance and persecution. The soul cannot live without some kind of religion; but as the worship of false gods perverted the moral sense of the heathen, so they who were taught to pray to the Virgin and dead saints instead of praying to God, became corrupt in their imaginations, and stern and cruel to those who would have called them to a purer worship. It has seldom been found that the religion of a persecutor was any thing better than a devotion to a name or form. Archbishop Arundel, after he had seen the establishment of successful rebellion in A.D. 1399, immediately obtained the new king's consent to a decree, that a morning-bell should

---

with lands and tithes; and many of the inmates were of noble families; for in those days it was a common way with persons of the highest rank to provide for the younger daughters of a large family by making nuns of them. The vice of drunkenness seems to have been the besetting vice of this house. The abbess, Clementina Guilford, in A.D. 1315, appears to have been poisoned, or to have died of drink. And Joyce Rowe, another abbess, A.D. 1506, was accused before Bishop Fox of inviting the nuns every night after compline to drink with her in her chamber; and she was herself habitually addicted to strong potations. Marmaduke Huby, the last abbot of Fountains, in a MS. letter to Lord Dacre, A.D. 1524, says that the nuns of his order for the last two hundred years had "remissly kept their vow."

toll daily in every church in England at day-break, and that at that sound every one should offer the same prayers to the Virgin, to whom they attributed their success, as were already appointed for the evening hour[1]. The controversy between the Franciscans and Dominicans, on the Immaculate Conception, has been already referred to; although the decree of the Council of Basil, A.D. 1439, in favour of this doctrine, was not recognised at Rome, it was adopted by a Gallican Synod at Avignon, A.D. 1457, and the University of Paris caused all who took degrees to subscribe to it. Still the controversy continued, so that Sixtus IV., A.D. 1476, ordained that none should say it was wrong or sinful to maintain it[2]. The growth of this superstition had been gradual. We find it on the increase in the twelfth century, when St. Bernard took some pains to prevent some such festival as this from being adopted by the clergy of Lyons, though his own veneration for the Virgin was not free from superstition. The Saxon hermits and holy men, who were resorted to by the common people after the conquest, committed her name to short hymns and prayers in verse. By degrees her altars and her images outshone those of other saints; and almost in every church the worshippers were reminded by outward signs of the value of her intercession. Frauds and fables followed next. At Walsingham, in Norfolk, she was said to work constant miracles; and consequently there was no place which attracted greater multitudes of pilgrims. The most strange titles were given to her, which the figures and types of Scripture, or an unchastened fancy, could supply:—the burning bush seen by Moses, the reconciler of the old law and

---

[1] If this be the origin of the morning-bell, which still sounds in many churches, it is remarkable that it should have been meant to preserve the memory of a revolution no less disastrous in its results than that which the curfew calls to mind. See WILKINS, *Concil.* iii. 1 Hen. IV.

[2] LAMBERTINI *de Festis*, p. 460.

the new, the window of heaven, the gate of paradise, the throne of the Trinity; or the brightest rose, the fairest lily, the light of love and beauty, and queen of courtesy. These were commonly sung in her English praises; but there was also often written on the walls of churches dedicated to her a Latin hymn to the following purpose:

Maid and mother, raised on high,
Guard us from above the sky;
Virgin, pray for us!
She the wound of sin can close,
She, heav'n's flower, our sorrow knows;
Mary, pray for us!

Star of ocean, help us now,
Turn on us thy gentle brow;
Mary, pray for us!
By her gift salvation's given;
She can ope the gate of heaven;
Virgin, pray for us!

Maid and mother ever pure,
From temptation shield us sure;
Mary, pray for us!
She the port in all distress,
From the world's unfaithfulness;
Virgin, pray for us!

Gabriel's daughter, duly praised,
Listen to our voice upraised,
Virgin, pray for us!
By thy Son on thee we call,
Virgin Mother, help us all,
Mary, pray for us[1]!

When Wycliffe preached against some of these depravations, he said, with a full sense of the unpalatable nature of his doctrine, "I wot well that this belief winneth not the penny." It is marvellous what wealthy gifts were poured in to such places as Walsingham, and Becket's shrine at Canterbury. Of this last we have a particular description from a distinguished eye-witness,

[1] The Latin is in WEEVER, *Fun. Mon.*

who saw it a short time before it was destroyed,—Erasmus of Rotterdam. After speaking of an old altar of the Virgin, "where the holy man was said to have bidden her his last farewell, and the sword by which his skull was said to have been cut open," he proceeds as follows:—"Hence we went into the crypt, where is exhibited the martyr's skull, pierced through, all covered with silver, except the crown, which is left bare for the devout to kiss. There also hang in darkness the hair shirt, the girdle, and small clothes which the prelate wore to subdue the flesh; things which it made one shudder to look upon, and upbraiding us for the softness and delicacy of our times. Hence we returned to the choir, and saw a wonderful quantity of bones—skulls, jaws, teeth, hands, fingers, and arms—all to be kissed with devout reverence; which were brought from some closets on the north side. Then we viewed the altar-table and its ornaments; and afterwards the treasures stored under the altar—such a store, that if you saw them, you would say they beggared Midas and Crœsus. After this we were led into the vestry, where, amidst a splendid show of silken vestments and golden candlesticks, we saw the saint's crosier, a slender rod overlaid with silver, of very little weight, no remarkable workmanship, and little more than a yard long. There was also his pall, of silk, but of coarse thread, not ornamented with gold or jewels of any kind. Then there was a napkin, or handkerchief, with marks of sweat and blood still visible, which were the stains occasioned by its having been worn about his neck. These things were not shewn to every body; but I had some acquaintance with the archbishop, William Warham, who gave me two or three words of introduction to the monks of the cathedral. We were therefore led into the higher parts of the church behind the high altar, going up by steps into a kind of new chapel. There we were shewn an image of the eminent saint all gilded over, and adorned with many gems."

The companion[1] of Erasmus on this occasion, gave offence by suggesting that some of these treasures might with advantage be given to the poor, and he himself, while he allows that they were perhaps as well bestowed as if they had been squandered by the donors in wars or gambling, concludes with an expression of regret, that there was now no disposition to imitate the good example of those bishops of earlier time, who have sold the holy vessels in a time of distress, and succoured the poor with the money. He goes on to describe the sight of Becket's coffin, in which, together with his bones, was packed a rich casket of jewels, the presents of kings and princes accumulated during three centuries, and a chapel of the Virgin in the crypt secured by a double iron railing, which seems to have been the richest treasury of all. Within a few years more, shortly before Erasmus died, all these riches were scattered by Henry's prodigality: and the most splendid jewel of them all, called the Royal of France, presented by Louis VII. in A.D. 1179, was set in the monarch's seal-ring, where it seems to be represented in some of Holbein's pictures.

What drew so many gifts to Canterbury and Walsingham was, doubtless, the reputation which these places enjoyed for miracles. Those which came nearest to them in this respect were St. Alban's, St. Edmund's at Bury, and St. Ethelburga's at Barking. But there were others in the more remote districts;—the North-country men had their saints, and the Welch had theirs. Were these miracles always frauds practised on the public credulity? It seems harsh to pronounce such an opinion. The probability is, that in times when the imagination was so little under control from the reason, it had the power to effect more on the bodily

[1] Under the Latin name of "Gratianus Pullus," Mr. Churton thinks it probable that Erasmus designates Sir John More, knight and judge of the King's Bench, father of Sir Thomas More. The father and son were much alike in character,—both loving a jest.

system. Physicians well know, that in many cases the operation of medicine will do little without the aid of the fancy and influence of the mind upon the body. Nervous disorders, as they are called, no doubt existed in earlier ages under a different name; and these disorders are not altogether unreal, because they have so much to do with the imagination. But in cases of real disease, a strong persuasion has often been found as effectual as medicine to cause or to remove the malady. There is a remarkable story of an experiment of this kind, which was entirely successful, when loyalty, and not religion, gave it its healing power. It was at the famous siege of Breda, in A.D. 1625, when the garrison was dreadfully afflicted with the scurvy. The Prince of Orange hearing of their distress, and fearing lest they should surrender the place, wrote letters to the men, promising them speedy relief, and accompanied with medicines, said to be of great value and of greater efficacy. The quantity was very small; but more was promised. In the mean time the physicians, who were in the secret, divided these medicines among them, and gave it out that three or four drops out of a small phial were enough to impart a healthful virtue to a gallon of liquor. The effects of the delusion were wonderful: the soldiers flocked in crowds to ask for the prince's remedy,—some recovered instantly; and many, who had been deprived of the use of their limbs for a month before, were seen walking about the streets, sound and straight, and perfectly whole[1].

But that there were also many impostures practised admits of no reasonable doubt. Sir Thomas More tells the well-known story of the sham-miracle at St. Alban's, as related to him by his father, whom we have just left as the supposed companion of Erasmus[2]. This story is

[1] Dr. Lind *on the Scurvy*. From Vander Mye, a Dutch physician, present at the siege.

[2] Sir T. More's *Works*, ed. 1557, p. 134.

perfectly authentic, as told with admirable effect by Shakspeare[1], who does full historical justice to all the characters present, more especially the simple and somewhat credulous piety of Henry VI., and the shrewdness of good Duke Humphrey. The records of the time have preserved the same account, from which Shakspeare evidently derived it; of a fellow who imposed upon the king by pretending to have been born blind, and to have obtained his sight by touching St. Alban's bones. But Duke Humphrey convicted him of falsehood, by making him tell the colour of every man's dress, and thus showing that he could not have been blind before. There is no proof of any concert with the monks in this case; the wretched knave seems to have done it of his own impulse to obtain public commiseration. But we must judge differently of two or three other cases on record. The blood of Hayles abbey, a relic deposited there in the thirteenth century as the true blood of our Lord, appears to have been afterwards changed by the monks for clarified honey, with which they deceived the people by some optical deception. The rood of grace, as it was called, at Boxley in Kent, was a piece of mechanism moved by wires, by which the features of the image were made to frown or smile[2]. The first of these impostures is like that for a long time exhibited at Naples, —the blood of St. Januarius. A fraud like the last seems to have been attempted in Majorca at the time of the expulsion of the Jesuits, in A.D. 1768, when an image of the Virgin at a church in Palma was said to have moved the posture of her arms in token of displeasure. There is some contradiction in the accounts of these cheats; but the fact is not easily disproved.

Robert Whitgift, the uncle of the able Archbishop Whitgift, was the head of a small Austin priory at

---

[1] *King Henry* VI. Part ii.

[2] See WORDSWORTH'S *Eccl. Biog.* ii. 279-281.

Belleau, in Lincolnshire. Here his nephew was educated under him—for the place was a kind of school; and he is said to have told the future primate that he was well aware these houses must be broken up—that their religion, as it then was, was not according to the Gospel[1]. On the whole, the monastic system had lost that rank in public opinion, which is often the surest defence of established institutions. A law of Henry VI[2] recites the complaint of the Abbey of Fountains, that the bailiffs of the several manors in which they had property, conspired to cite the Abbot on the same day to all their Courts, in order that not being able to attend, he might be fined for default. Such affronts would not have been offered to the lordly Abbot a century before; and they indicate a remarkable change in the public sentiments.

One circumstance which tended to bring the privileges of the ecclesiastical foundations into contempt, was the abuse of the rights of sanctuary. A bull of Innocent VIII., A.D. 1487[3], which restricts some of these privileges, recites that "there are certain ecclesiastical places in England which have such immunity, that whatever malefactors, (whatsoever homicides, incendiaries, sacrileges, thefts, and other offences they may have committed,) also public robbers, and traitors resorting thither, and there remaining, cannot be dragged from thence. But not only so, they go out from thence to commit other depredations, and return there, knowing that justice cannot overtake them." The knights of St. John appear to have carried their claim of privilege to an intolerable height. Their priests took upon them to grant absolution to whom they pleased, so that even the excommunication of a bishop might be set at nought by those who had the favour of these proud and turbulent ecclesiastics, who

[1] *Life of Whitgift*, by Sir G. Paule, p. 3.
[2] 33 Hen. VI. c. vi.
[3] *Concil.* iii. 621.

were all required to be of noble birth, and whose grand Prior sat in parliament next after the princes of the blood. To such an extent did their priests abuse their power of celebrating marriages in their churches, that complaint was made by a bishop in A.D. 1488, that parties thus got married contrary to divine and canon law, often while a suit was pending respecting such marriage[1]. In the time of Henry VIII. their churches had obtained the name of lawless churches, and were the customary resort for clandestine marriages.

The condition of the seats of learning and of the foundations for the poor and sick, seems to have been equally deplorable. In the year 1421, an act of parliament[2] recites that many scholars and clerks of Oxford, armed and arrayed in manner of war, have oftentimes put out divers persons of their lands and tenements in Oxfordshire, Berkshire, and Buckinghamshire; and hunted with dogs and greyhounds in divers parks, warrens, and forests in the said counties, as well by day as by night, and taken deer, hares, and conies, and threatened the keepers with their lives, and rescued convicted clerks out of the hand of their ordinaries. A short time before this, a law of the same reign recites that many hospitals which were endowed to sustain impotent men and women, lazars, poor women with child, and the like, are now for the most part decayed, and the goods and profits of the same, by divers persons, as well spiritual as temporal, withdrawn and spent otherwise, whereby many men and women have died in great misery for default of aid and succour[3]. And the Oxford articles of the same reign accuse the masters and wardens of diverting these goods to their own use. It is too true that this imputation does not belong to their times alone. And this information is obtained through the vigorous attempts of a great monarch who

---

[1] Cf. *Concil.* iii. 625, iii. 724.
[2] 9 Henry V. c. 8.
[3] 2 Henry V. c. 1.

was nobly intent on their reformation. But our object is to draw from authentic sources a picture of the times before the Reformation, in order that we may not have to seek our authority from those who may be thought to have been interested in darkening the picture.

CHAPTER XIII.

CONDITION OF THE PAROCHIAL CLERGY IN THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY. POWER OF THE POPES AND THEIR CHARACTER.

> Alas! of fearful things
> 'Tis the most fearful when the people's eye
> Abuse hath cleared from vain imaginings,
> And taught the general voice to prophecy
> Of Justice arm'd and pride to be laid low.
>
> WORDSWORTH, *Eccl. Sketches*, ii. ix.

IN pursuance of the same object as in the preceding chapter, the condition of the parochial clergy must now claim our attention; and it was sufficiently deplorable, whether we consider the misconduct of the wealthier incumbents, or the abject situation and the ignorance of the inferior clergy.

It was among the complaints of the Oxford University in the articles of reformation before referred to, in the reign of Henry V., that prelates are not ashamed to give the cure of souls to their young relations, and beardless companions, and that it tends to the subversion of the Church that youths, like insolent squires, not distinguished from laymen by dress or tonsure, occupy prebends and chapels in the church. They proceed to complain of those who live away from their cure, devoted only to pleasure and gain, and spend their time in cities or in the courts of lords, intent only upon their banquets and their cups. "And whereas very few are able, and they hardly, to rule a single cure, or their own souls, as will be known at the last trump, now-a-days 'tis wondrous how so many thoughtless persons, panting after worldly lust rather than the safety of souls, dare to accumulate to themselves so many benefices." And the luxurious habits of these

semi-clerical persons is thus again adverted to; "clergy in name alone, knights or soldiers in dress, in reality neither, they would fain belong to both classes, and are deserters and confounders of both." A similar complaint was made by the convocation in A.D. 1460, that many of the clergy dress like gallants, with scarlet collars to their doublets; and what is still more remarkable is that many of these persons are said, in a constitution of Archbishop Bourchier about the same time, to have been actually not ordained, or suspended from their orders. And a little later, the good Archbishop Warham, the predecessor of Cranmer, complains, A.D. 1529, that priests, and clerks in sacred orders, are not ashamed to go about publicly like laymen, with hounds in leash and hawks in hand. The higher clergy indeed were very generally given to these pursuits. Complaint was made in 1414 that bishops and archdeacons go their visitations with an excessive retinue, which those whom they visit have to maintain, and take money which is called procuration from some clergymen to be excused the expense of their visits. And it is recorded that an Archdeacon of Richmond once came to Bridlington Priory, in the course of his visitation, with ninety-seven horses, twenty-one dogs, and three hawks[1].

We have an instance of one of those youthful pluralists of high family, in the case of Fitzhugh, dean of Lincoln, about A.D. 1510. He had a papal bull to hold any benefice short of a bishopric at the age of sixteen; and he held with his deanery, the rectory of Bingham in Nottinghamshire, with the canonry of Whitington; Kirby Ravensworth, and Bedale in Yorkshire, Wintringham in Lincolnshire, a prebend in Lincoln Minster, and the mastership of Pembroke Hall in Cambridge. At a visitation of the cathedral by Bishop Smyth about this time, the dean's attendants were accused of breaking the windows and damaging the roof of the Minster with their arrows and cross-bows; and it was shown

[1] DUGDALE, *Monasticon*, ii. 65.

that a gentleman of his retinue had a chamber adjoining one of the chantries, to which the chaplains resorted to play at dice and cards till past midnight[1]. The situation of a chaplain, whether in a cathedral town or in a nobleman's family, seems to have been sought as an exemption from residence. For, a century before this, complaint had been made that the clergy got themselves made chaplains, and pretended exemption from residence, "when in truth they would rather enjoy their cups and their ease in towns and cities, than serve churches with cure of souls[2]."

It must be confessed that the inducements held out to those who continued in the parochial cure were of the smallest possible kind. The stipends of curates were limited by law, and might in no case exceed ten marks per annum. The tithes of many parishes were appropriated to monasteries, and vicars maintained at the lowest stipends: in some instances they were devoted to the supply of the bishop's table. Lay patrons were not slow to follow these examples by exacting all sorts of simoniacal contracts. And the consequence was that the country clergy fell into a deplorable state of ignorance and poverty. The University of Oxford complained that all were so full of avarice that bishops would put in their own relations under age into livings, that they might reserve part to themselves; that presentations and impropriations were sold; that the appropriation of the tithes of parishes to monasteries and to bishops' tables, caused desolation to the parishes, deprived the poor of their alms, and caused the cure of souls to be neglected; that in some cases the whole tithes were appropriated, leaving only a stipendiary priest removeable at will, and others were endowed with so small a stipend that the vicar could not live. Before this, Archbishop Courtney, in A.D. 1391, complained of those whom he called "chop-churches,"

---

[1] Archdeacon Ralph Churton's *Life of Bishop Smyth.*

[2] *Concil.* iii. 335.

who by exchanges and other frauds reduced the curates to poverty, and of others who made those who were inducted take an oath to them to receive no emolument and to resign when called upon; so that when Wycliffe assigned as a reason why his "poor priests" have no benefices, that they were afraid of simony, and that none could obtain livings without some simoniacal contract, there seems to have been some ground for his assertion [1].

But that which tended most of all to the ruin of the parochial clergy was the system of provisors; by which persons who had been presented to livings by the patrons were ejected by others who during the life of a former incumbent had obtained what was called a provision from the pope to succeed on the next vacancy. For the pope claimed to present to all the livings in Christendom, as well as to the bishoprics, by divine right, and as these provisions were openly sold, it entailed upon the parochial clergy a system of constant and ruinous litigation. It seems to have been the ruinous consequences of this system to which the reference is made in the following words with which the University concluded their list of the grievances of the Church. "Simple vicars and curates are oppressed by force and violence, and maliciously indicted on false accusations by hired testimony; and while the innocent blood is shed, the simplicity of many priests does not procure legal remedy for fear of being put to death, but either they buy off these unjust vexations with the goods of the church, or are compelled for fear of their lives to give up the care of their flocks, and fly the country." Many laws indeed were made both against

[1] See Barclay's *Ship of Fools*, p. 59.

Courtiers become priests, nought knowing but the dice,
They priest not for God, but for a benefice,
The clarke of the kitchen is a priest become,
In full trust to come to promotion high,
Nothing by virtue, cunning, or wisdom,
But by covetise, practise and flattery.

appropriations and papal provisions. In the time of Richard II. it was enacted that in every case of appropriation of the tithes of any parish to a monastery, or otherwise, the bishop should ordain a fit sum to the poor, and a proper and sufficient endowment to the vicar[1]; and this law was confirmed and enlarged by an act of Henry IV.[2] which complains that the monasteries put monks into their livings unfit for the parochial ministry. But it was for the purpose of evading these laws, that the wholesale system of simoniacal contracts was introduced, which we have above described. More effectual means were sometimes taken to shelter those who had obtained papal provisions against the laws of the land. For an act was passed by Henry IV. to pardon all who had obtained preferments by such means, and allow them "to put their grace in execution[3];" that is, to avail themselves of the pope's gift. But the vigorous hand of his son was exerted to defend the actual possessors, and in his reign it was enacted that all should enjoy their livings, and no provisors be suffered to eject them[4].

The degraded condition of the parochial clergy consequent upon this state of things, is evinced by the following complaint of Archbishop Bourchier, A.D. 1455. He declares that there are priests in his diocese who are perfect strangers, bringing with them no recommendations, nor letters of orders: and some of them so illiterate as to be not only unlearned, but hardly to know how to read[5]. And at another time complaints were made that foreigners, ignorant even of the English language, were promoted to the best preferments. Some of the more vigorous bishops, as William of Wainfleet and Smyth bishop of Lincoln,

---

[1] 15 Rich II., c. 6. See before, p. 168.
[2] 4 Hen. IV., c. 12, A.D. 1402.
[3] 11 Henry IV., c. 10.
[4] 3 Henry V., c. 4.
[5] 1455. 33 Hen. VI. *Concil.* iii. 574.

sometimes took an oath of those whom they ordained, that they would learn Latin, the very language in which all the services were which they had to perform. But it was in vain that the Church of England made regulations, when the court of Rome would often admit those to orders who had been rejected at home as ignorant and unworthy [1]. Nay it appears from the records of the Council of Constance, that several incumbents had dispensations from the pope, sometimes for seven years, sometimes for life, to excuse them from entering into such orders as were requisite to qualify them for their function [2]. It would not be expected that such ministers would have an elevated view of their calling, or propose an elevated standard to their people. But if we are astonished at the degraded nature of some of their teaching, let us hope that these are the worst instances, and let us remember that we should not have known them at all but for the attempts of those in authority to put them down.

It does not appear that such exhibitions as the Feast of Fools, and the like, had been discontinued since the time of Wycliffe, for in a proclamation of Henry VIII., A.D. 1541, mention is made of childish observances yet to this day observed and kept in sundry parts of this realm; "children be strangely decked and apparelled to counterfeit priests, bishops, and women; and so led from house to house, misleading the people and gathering of money; and boys do sing mass and preach in the pulpit, with other unfitting usages, rather to the derision than to any true glory of God." But perhaps the most extraordinary instance of this kind of abuse, is the celebration of what was called "Glutton Mass." We learn from an order against it, made when Repington was bishop of Lincoln, that a custom then prevailed in the deanery of Leicester, of celebrating early in the morning during the five days of the Feast of the

[1] *Concil.* iii. 364.
[2] RYMER, tom. ix., p. 337, quoted by Collier.

Annunciation, a "glutton mass," the curates of all the churches in the deanery going about from one to the other in turn, and encouraging the people, instead of attending matins or high mass, to give themselves up to eating and drinking in the pot-houses of the town[1]. These were acknowledged abuses, and let us hope not of frequent occurrence. But the provision that was made to supply the ignorant priests with subjects for their sermons does not improve our view of the case. A book of festivals was published[2] in the reign of Henry VII., professedly "for the help of clerks to excuse them for default of books," containing sermons for festivals, after the fashion of our homilies. In one of these, in the office for the dedication of churches, the following story is told to deter the people from irreverent behaviour in the house of God. "That St. Austin saw two women prating together in the pope's chapel, and the fiend sat in their necks writing a great roll of what the women talked; and letting it fall, Austin went and took it up, and asking the women what they had said all mass time, they answered, Our Pater noster. Then Austin read the roll, and there was never a good word in it." In the same book a story is told, to deter people from stealing. of a man dying excommunicated, who had stolen an abbot's ox, and his spirit walked by night and came and besought the priest to go with his wife to the abbot, and pray him to assoil him, that so he might rest. "And anon the abbot assoiled him, and he went to rest and joy for evermore." We are not so much surprised that such things should be believed by the vulgar in rude times; but that which is surprising is, that they should be taught from the pulpit, and such teaching provided by authority.

It is impossible here to enter upon the scandal which meets us in every page of the Church history of these times, arising from the unhappy endeavour to enforce

---

[1] WILKINS, *Concil.*, iii., 389.

[2] STRYPE, *Eccl. Mem.*, pt. i. p. 213, Oxford edit.

celibacy, not only on the inmates of monasteries, but on the parochial clergy. It seems to have given rise to what are called left-handed marriages to such an extent, that the practice was not merely connived at, but in one instance declared to be expedient[1]. A similar opinion is related by a celebrated French ecclesiastic as being general in France[2], and the Oxford divines, assuming such unions to be unlawful, complain of the scandal arising from them, and the bad example to other evil persons[3]. But it is an odious task to investigate such matters. Let us thank God that such times are past, and let us take warning how vain it is to enforce by legal sanction, those high and self-devoted qualities, which, if ever they be acceptable or praiseworthy, must be spontaneous.

And yet, amidst this obscurity of divine Truth, and this corruption in practice, some vestige remained of purer doctrine, as well as some examples of holier practice. The bidding of beads, or the bidding of prayer, was always used in English, and preserved a remnant of the glorious intercession of the ancient liturgy of Jerusalem. A priest of Malines, in the Low Countries, known by his Latin name of Pupperius, who died A.D. 1486, published several works now proscribed by the Church of Rome, in which he maintained "the Free Justification of a Sinner by the Blood of Christ." And it is related of Ernest, Archbishop of Magdebourg, that when a Franciscan friar came to him on his deathbed, and bade him not fear, "for we communicate to you all the good works, not only of ourselves but our whole Order, and therefore doubt not, but you receiving them, shall appear before the tribunal of God righteous and blessed;" the good man replied to this hollow comforter, "By no means will I rely upon my own works or yours, but the works of Jesus Christ alone shall

[1] By a Council at Toledo in Spain, as quoted by DUPIN.

[2] Nicholas de Clamenge, Canon of Langres, in BROWNE'S *Fasciculus*.

[3] *Concil.* iii. 364.

suffice; upon these will I repose myself." It may be thought a doubtful instance of improvement in religious feeling to mention that Henry VII. was accustomed to engage, by an annual payment, any good men whose prayers he valued, to pray for himself and his family. Yet certainly none can blame the pious desire to be remembered in good men's prayers. Who would not covet them? It may be added, that the few chantries which were now founded, had schools attached to them, at which the mass-priests were to teach grammar freely to poor scholars. Such was the case in a chantry provided by the Princess Margaret[1], and in a hospital at Lichfield, endowed by Bishop Smyth. The beautiful prayer provided by this good bishop for the use of the inmates of his hospital, is wholly free from anything inconsistent with the simplicity of primitive worship.

Plain it is, however, that through the whole of the fifteenth century the one obstacle to the hopes of all good men for a reformation in the Church, was the power and the claims of the popes. It was in vain that patriotic laws were made to curb the usurped interference of a foreign bishop in the disposal of the preferment of the Church, when he had no scruple in setting those laws aside, and often was but too successful in doing so. It might be supposed that after the stringent laws against papal provisions in the reigns of Edward III. and Richard II., no Englishman would dare to accept them, even though the pope should attempt it. But in the reign of Henry V., as soon as the Council of Constance had terminated the schism, Pope Martin promoted, on his own authority, no less than fourteen persons to various bishoprics in the province of Canterbury alone. For the kings were accustomed to connive at this irregularity, in order to evade the legitimate influence of the cathedral chapter. They found it convenient to make a compact with the pope, by means of which the electors were often obliged by him to choose their

[1] Bishop Fisher's Funeral Sermon on the Lady Margaret.

nominee. The clergy would in some instances resist it; as the dean and chapter of York, in the fourth year of Henry VI., when Martin V. having by his bull preferred Richard Fleming, bishop of Lincoln, who burnt Wycliffe's bones, to the archbishopric of York, they refused to elect him to the see, and the pope was forced to submit, and send him back to Lincoln. But again, in A.D. 1438, Pope Eugene actually gave the bishopric of Ely *in commendam* to the French archbishop of Rouen; and after some resistance, this foreigner was allowed to enjoy the revenues. A sad perversion truly of the original purpose of a commendam, which was that, when a religious house was ill conducted, the pope would *commend* the care of it, for a while, to some pious bishop who should restore its discipline.

And it was the same source which poisoned the religion itself of the countries over which its influence extended. How much the friars had to do with the abuse of the confessional, and how entirely their power to abuse it was derived from Rome, we have already seen. But one should hardly have expected to find that the popes themselves would not only sanction but enjoin the betrayal of its secrets. Yet this was done in the reign of Henry VII., who obtained a general order from Pope Innocent VIII., that all confessors should deliver to him the confessions of as many lords as he pleased, written out, with an attestation subjoined on oath, that nothing more had been confided to them than they had delivered[1]. And this is said to have been one of the ways by which that monarch contrived to obtain such accurate information of all conspiracies against his government. But such treachery derives, if possible, a darker hue from the fact, that it was directly at variance with the solemn denunciation of the Church; for it had been determined by the fourth Lateran council, that whoever should reveal the secrets of the confessional, should not only be deposed from

[1] Sir H. Ellis, vol. i. letter 63.

the ministry, but consigned to perpetual imprisonment in the dungeon of a monastery.

Meantime the attempts which had been made to emancipate Christendom from this spiritual tyranny were by no means confined to a single nation. Charles VII. of France established the *pragmatic sanction* in a parliament of his kingdom at Bourges, A.D. 1438, by which the principles assumed by the Council of Basle were made the law of France. For twenty-three years after this the Church of France was free from all payments to the pope, elected her own prelates, and ordained her own clergy. If the pope should constrain any clergyman to pay anything to him, he might appeal to a general council; and any who should collect his taxes were to be fined and imprisoned. Pius II. succeeded for a time in getting this law suspended; but it was re-enacted by Louis XI. with additional clauses—such as, that no clergyman should go to Rome under pain of forfeiting his preferment; that none of the monastic orders should visit any monastery beyond the bounds of France; and the mendicant friars were threatened with the extirpation of their order, if they should violate it. This continued until A.D. 1516, when Francis I., for political objects, entered into a covenant with Rome. But during this interval the Church of France was very much in the same predicament, as regards its relations with Rome, as the Church of England was afterwards under Henry VIII.

In Germany also, when Pope Eugene had deposed the two Archbishops of Cologne and Treves, A.D. 1445, the whole body of the electors of the empire, being assembled at Frankfort the following year, demanded of the pope security to the liberties of their Church, restoration of the deposed archbishops, and the recognition of the decrees of the Councils of Constance and Basle concerning the authority of general councils. In 1446 they resolved, that the relation of the Church of Germany to the pope should be defined and secured by the diet of the empire; and when Pius II. had obtained

the decree of the Council of Mantua (1459), against appeals from the pope to a council, the electors of Germany, notwithstanding, appealed to a general council in 1464.

In England, although the measures taken to curb the power of the pope might not seem at the time to be quite so decided, they were destined, perhaps on that account, to have a more permanent influence. But even then the court of Rome was sufficiently aware of the importance of the *præmunire*, and eager to have it repealed. In the reign of Richard II., when that prince desired to have a bull to confirm the arbitrary measures which he had adopted towards the close of his reign, the pope took advantage of the request to stipulate for a relaxation of this law[1]. In the time of Henry VI. Pope Martin V. proceeded almost to extremity against Archbishop Chicheley, to compel him to use his influence that it might be wholly repealed. Edward IV., soon after his accession, was glad to purchase the countenance of the pope, by granting some relaxation of it. But the law itself, however sometimes evaded, was not by any means inoperative. In the time of Richard II. no individual of the mendicant orders might quit the kingdom without license from the king; and in the same reign, Dardain, the pope's collector, was made to swear that he would neither execute nor permit to be executed any of the pope's mandates to the disadvantage of the king, his laws, or his realm. Henry V. forbad a clergyman, named John Breman, to go to Rome, on pain of forfeiting one hundred pounds. Nor could any intercourse be legally carried on with the papal court without the royal sanction. In 1427, Archbishop Chicheley having received a sealed bull from Rome, a messenger came from the court to demand in the king's name that it should be given up to him, as being contrary to law; and this was followed by a writ, enjoining him to keep all bulls unopened,

[1] Bishop Lowth, *Life of Wykeham*, p. 260, 261.

and deliver them to the king, without whose consent he was not to execute them. And generally in the following reigns, the leading churchmen did not often venture to act upon letters from Rome, without authority from the crown.

While the fabric of papal power thus began to be undermined, the personal character of many of the popes was calculated to aggravate the odium of their exorbitant pretensions. "There is this special advantage," said a politic Italian of the time, "enjoyed by a spiritual potentate over all temporal sovereigns. The only difficulty is, to gain the prince's seat; when it is once gained, whether by virtue or good fortune, it requires neither the one nor the other to maintain it. The old ordinances of religion keep the pontiffs in their state, however they may act or live. They alone have a realm without defending it; they have subjects without the trouble of governing them; and their realm, though undefended, is not taken from them, and their subjects care not for being ungoverned; they never think, nor can they manage to be rid of their masters[1]." This was true. Nothing but a general council could depose a pope; and after the time of John XXIII., the popes took care to check all the efforts made by councils against their power. Secure in irresponsible power, they must have been more than men, if they did not often grievously abuse it. But the vices of all preceding popes seemed to be concentrated in Roderic Borgia, a Spaniard, who, succeeding in A.D. 1492, took the name of Alexander VI. Of him Guicciardini, the Florentine historian, writes, that there was in him no sincerity, no shame, no truth, no religion. And without dwelling upon a passage said to have been originally found in this historian, but suppressed in later editions, attributing to this monster and his family crimes too odious to be named, the following facts are not denied. He publicly acknowledged his mistress soon after he

[1] MACCHIAVELLI'S *Prince*, c. xi.

became pope; and of his two bastard sons, the elder he made duke of Candia; and wishing to promote the younger, Cæsar Borgia, in the Church, he procured a person to swear that he was his own legitimate son, without which he could not be made a cardinal. But Cæsar Borgia, not content to be a cardinal, caused his brother to be murdered and thrown into the Tiber, that he might enjoy his dukedom. It is worthy of remark, that it was in the time of Borgia, and under his authority as pope, that the discoverers of Spanish America put forth those unheard-of pretensions by which they claimed from the poor Indians the possession of their lands. "All these people," the inhabitants, that is, of the whole world, said Alonzo de Ojeda to the Indians of Carthagena, "were given in charge by God our Lord, to one person named St. Peter, who was thus made lord and superior of all the people of the earth, and head of the whole human lineage. . . . . This holy Father was obeyed as lord, king, and superior of the universe, by those who lived in his time, and in like manner have been obeyed and honoured all those who have been chosen to succeed him." And then he proceeds to tell them that the present pope has granted them and their lands to the Catholic sovereigns of Castile, and that if they do not submit he will invade and make war upon them, and take their wives and children, and sell them for slaves, and do them all manner of injury, as vassals who will not obey their sovereign[1]. It might seem to have been of special purpose that it was left to such a man as Roderic Borgia to be made the subject of such pretensions. Has it never occurred to the advocates of papal dominion, that the purposes of God are not without repentance, and that even if they could *prove* the authority which they claim for the pope, such authority might be revoked or forfeited by notorious sin? Julius II., the successor of Alexander, was scandalous for his wars,

[1] WASHINGTON IRVING'S *Companions of Columbus*, Appendix.

with which he disturbed the peace of Europe. He was said to have thrown the keys of St. Peter into the Tiber, declaring that from henceforth he would try his sword. He was succeeded A.D. 1513, by Leo X., of the house of Medici, who was a friend to peace and ease, and free from those vices which had disgraced his predecessors. But his magnificence led him into expense; and in order to support it, he carried to greater excess than ever the scandalous traffic in indulgences. In the time of this pope, when, as Erasmus speaks, the over-stretched cord of usurped power was on the point of breaking, the luxury of the court of Rome was advanced to its greatest height. The revival of ancient arts and learning, after long ages of forgetfulness, had filled the capital with poets, painters, sculptors, and architects, who found in Leo a splendid patron: but the panegyric of his flatterers addressed him in words which modest piety cannot hear without abhorrence. They dared to call him, by an impious play upon his name, "the *Lion* of the tribe of Judah," "king of kings, and monarch of the world;" and added the ascription which none but One can claim, "All power is given to thee in heaven and in earth." Leo himself appears to have had sense enough to see the outrageous folly of these addresses, if he did not shudder at their wickedness; but he had not the virtue to decline them. In fact there seems to be some ground for the charge of irreligion, which was brought against him. His agents in foreign countries were profligate men, who, while they preached the value of his pardons, might be seen gambling in ale-houses, and staking at hazard the very documents which professed to contain such awful and mysterious powers. To what could this tend, but to demoralise the many, to shock the pious, and to shake all faith in revealed truth?

Such was the state of society and of the Church at the time of the accession of Henry VIII. to the English throne.

CHAPTER XIV.

KING HENRY VIII. AND CARDINAL WOLSEY—LUTHER—THE KING'S DIVORCE AND SUBMISSION OF THE CLERGY.

> Never came reformation like a flood
> With such a heady current, scouring faults,
> As by this king.—SHAKSPEARE.

HENRY VIII. succeeded to the throne of England April 22, 1509; and no prince, for a century or more, had come to the crown under such favourable circumstances. Uniting the title of the rival houses of York and Lancaster, each party was anxious to claim him, and both concurred in devotion to his government. The vast wealth amassed by Henry VII., amounting to a million and eight hundred thousand pounds sterling, in those days an enormous sum, enabled him to indulge his taste for expense; and that which had made his father unpopular, served to buy him cheap applause. His personal qualities, also, were calculated to add to the favourable view which his subjects were inclined to take of his character. Handsome, affable, and young, he was calculated to win the applause of the vulgar; while his undoubted learning and abilities obtained him the respect of graver persons. There were not wanting instances, indeed, which to observant minds might cast a shade of doubt over these favourable auspices. It was ungenerous to purchase popularity to himself by the sacrifice of Empson and Dudley, the ministers of his father's avarice; and it was still worse to withhold the property of his grandmother, Margaret of Richmond, on account of some informalities in her will, and put her executors to expense in obtaining the fulfilment of her munificent charities. But these things were not obvious at first; while the apparent success of his

government—the deference which the greatest sovereigns of the day found it their interest to pay to him—the success of his French campaign, trifling as it was—and the still more important victory over the Scots at Flodden Field,—all served to impress his subjects with exalted notions of his greatness, which he was by no means slow himself also to imbibe. These circumstances seem to account, in some degree, for the absolute and arbitrary power with which he was able to govern, and for the servile deference with which his subjects treated him.

It is, however, manifest that a good part of the success of Henry's earlier days was owing to the government of his great minister, the famous Cardinal Wolsey, although the influence of this remarkable person may have had a very unfavourable effect upon his own character. Thomas Wolsey, a person of humble parentage at Ipswich, had received his education at Magdalen College, Oxford; and after struggling with many difficulties, having sought and obtained an introduction at court, had commended himself so well to Henry VII., by his despatch in conveying a message to the Emperor, that he was already dean of Lincoln when Henry VIII. succeeded to the throne. In each of these situations, he gave an earnest of those qualities for which he was afterwards conspicuous. The unrivalled tower of Magdalen College, if not designed by him, was completed under his auspices as bursar; and the deanery-house at Lincoln still retains the traces of his architectural skill. Something of scandal had attached to his character while resident for a short time upon a country living in Hampshire; while his zealous devotion to his employers, as well as his aspiring turn of mind, had made him useful to those courtiers, whom the same qualities soon enabled him to supersede in the royal favour. Being commended to Henry by Fox, bishop of Winchester, one of the chief counsellors of the late king, it is said that he ingratiated himself with his youthful sovereign, not less by his ability in all matters of business, than

by flattering his vanity, and ministering to his pleasures and his vices. Persons of humble origin rise more rapidly under an arbitrary monarch, than under any other form of government. Envy keeps them back where they contend with equals; but a despotic sovereign is gratified to exalt the creatures of his own choice; and Henry showered greatness on his favourite with an unsparing hand. In A.D. 1514 he made him Bishop of Tournay, his recent conquest in France, then of Lincoln, and then Archbishop of York, all in one year. Soon after, retaining York and Tournay, he exchanged Lincoln for Durham; and, as if that were not enough, on the death of Bishop Fox, he was translated from Durham to Winchester, having also the bishopric of Bath, and the Abbey of St. Alban's, the wealthiest in England, *in commendam*. The pope made him cardinal of St. Cecilia; and because it was doubtful whether these honours entitled him to rank before the Archbishop of Canterbury, he procured the office also of legate *à latere*, in virtue of which he annulled a convocation summoned by the archbishop, and called another in his own name. Henry VII., to save the expense of paying some of the papal envoys, had given them the two bishoprics of Worcester and Hereford; these bishoprics Wolsey took to farm, paying a certain sum to the Italian prelates, who had no desire to reside in England, and receiving the revenues himself. To crown his greatness, Warham, archbishop of Canterbury, who had been also lord chancellor of Henry VII., resigned the latter office, which was immediately bestowed upon the favourite.

Wolsey did not bear himself in his great fortune with such meekness as to disarm the envy excited by his sudden elevation. He assumed almost royal state, had lords and gentlemen in his train, rebuilt the palace of the archbishops of York at York Place, now Whitehall, in a princely style, and began a still more splendid residence at Hampton Court. But the kingdom prospered under his administration; his judgments in chancery

were equitable and unbiassed, and his attention to the externals of religion was scrupulously regular. It must be feared that his religion went no further than externals; for, without discussing the vile imputations cast upon him by his enemies after his fall, it is sufficiently certain that he had a bastard son, whom he permitted to assume his arms, and for whom he provided in the Church; and there was a nun at Shaftesbury at the time of the dissolution, who was also said to be his daughter[1]. It is not from such persons that we are to expect any great progress in purifying religious truth; yet Wolsey was too great a statesman to be insensible to the condition of the Church, and too confident in his own powers to be deterred from attempting a remedy. His foundation at Oxford, of which the noble establishment of Christ Church is but a remnant, would have been the most splendid in Europe. It was not, indeed, like some other foundations, the result of the founder's self-denial or frugality. But it was the measure of a bold and energetic statesman to convert a number of decayed religious houses into a magnificent place of education. He was preparing also to redress the abuses in the Church with a vigorous and unshrinking hand, when the fatal turn arrived in the tide of his affairs, which was at once ruinous to himself, and to that overgrown fabric of Church-power, of which he at once exemplified both the splendour and the abuse. Nothing could have seemed less probable in the commencement of Henry's reign, than that he should himself become the instrument of liberating his country from the dominion of the pope. Yet even then some steps had been taken towards restricting the privileges of the clergy, which are the more important as they are connected with those laws, by means of which that object was afterwards more entirely accomplished. One of the greatest grievances for the last two centuries had been the exemption of all the clergy from being tried in the king's

[1] Sir H. Ellis, letter cxxxiii. p. 91.

courts. This was extended not only to bishops, priests, and deacons, but even to those inferior orders, which were commonly conferred on all the servants of churches and monasteries. But, in A.D. 1515, a law was made that in cases of burglary or murder, those below the rank of deacon should be tried in the king's courts. This law, which to us seems so reasonable, created the most violent sensation.

And the feeling of the clergy against it was much aggravated when the citizens of London endeavoured to prosecute in the King's Bench Dr. Horsey, the Bishop of London's chancellor, against whom a coroner's jury, influenced, perhaps, by momentary excitement, had brought in a verdict of murder, in consequence of a person imprisoned on a charge of heresy having been found dead in the bishop's prison. The bishops, instead of soothing the popular feelings, blindly exasperated them, by passing sentence of heresy against the dead man, and ordering his body to be burnt in Smithfield; and the convocation commenced a process against Dr. Standish, a Franciscan friar, who had argued in favour of the law, and against the exemption of the clergy. Standish having appealed to the king, the point was submitted to the judges; and they determined that the whole convocation who had proceeded against Standish had incurred the penalty of the *præmunire*. This seems to have been a great stretch of that remarkable law, which was originally passed to restrict appeals and suits in the courts of the pope; and the only ground on which this convocation could be deemed to be a papal court was, that it had been convened by Wolsey as the papal legate. But it was a severe blow to the clergy; for all the members of the convocation were forced to go, with the cardinal at their head, and beg the king's pardon on their knees. Henry was then content to compromise the matter. Horsey was made to appear in the King's Bench, but was not prosecuted; and the proceedings against Standish were dropped. But a great principle was thus established, and the king's

attention was called to the power of these restrictive laws, and to his own true position; for, in answer to the humble suit of the prostrate clergy, he used these ominous words, "By the permission of God we are king of England; and the kings of England in times past had never any superior but God only. Therefore know you well, that we will maintain the right of our crown."

MARTIN LUTHER was at this time an Augustin friar, and a professor at the University of Wittemberg, in Saxony, to which he had been appointed by its founder, the Elector Frederick, in consequence of his distinction as a scholar and a preacher. He was already a man of high character among the clergy in Germany, when he began, in A.D. 1517, by writing first to the Archbishop Elector of Mentz, to whom Leo had issued indulgences to farm by way of revenue, and then to the pope himself, to complain of the shameful proceedings of their agents. He was answered by one of them, Tetzel, a Dominican friar, and was soon engaged in controversy on every side. He still professed allegiance to the pope, but being condemned by a cardinal who was sent to treat with him, and then by the pope himself, he publicly delivered an appeal to a general council. The pope was not yet aware of the importance of the question. Despising the poverty of the individual, he overlooked the powerful sympathies by which he was supported. To excommunicate Luther, and order his books to be burnt, might have availed a century before, but now it only widened the breach, and relieved the reforming party from any difficulty about separating from the papal see, when they were thus hastily and unjustly cut off from its communion. Luther proceeded to further measures. He undertook the translation of the Scriptures into German; he demanded the restoration of the cup to the laity in the Holy Communion; and maintained the doctrine of justification by faith alone in the strongest possible terms. This has been called the distinctive doctrine of the

Reformation, and in one sense it deserves to be so. Placed in opposition to the vain reliance on human merits, pilgrimages, and pardons, this doctrine signifies that CHRIST alone is our salvation, and that faith is the means by which we apprehend it. In this light it seems to have been applied by the reformers, in opposition to the prevalent doctrine of human merit, much in the same way as St. Paul applied it to oppose the Jewish notion of salvation by the law. But Luther certainly stated it in such a manner as to give occasion to his opponents to accuse him of disregarding holiness of life; and the violence of his language on this and some other points, set an example of bitterness which has been but too readily followed on either side. However, it was the preaching of Christ crucified which was indeed the secret of his influence and of that of his fellow-labourers. In doctrine they sometimes differed among themselves, and sometimes held nearly the same opinion with their opponents. But they supplied a want in the teaching of the Church, without which all else is vain, and restored the doctrine of the Cross to its true pre-eminence, as the only refuge of the sinner's hopes.

The excitement which these proceedings caused in Germany was the more quickly communicated to England, in consequence of the latent spirit of religious inquiry which already so widely prevailed. The despised followers of Wycliffe had continued to read his Bible and to cherish his opinions; and their zeal is marked by the records of many instances of persecution. These were sometimes attended with circumstances of great atrocity. Henry VII. was present at Canterbury, when a poor priest, who had recanted by his persuasion, was nevertheless committed to the flames; and it was in his reign that those horrors were committed at Agmondesham in Bucks, which charity would lead us to hope may have been exaggerated, but which Foxe relates as told to him by a spectator, when a woman was compelled to set fire to the fagots which were to burn her father.

And yet, while scenes of this kind were from time to time renewed throughout the whole district between the Humber and Thames, they had no effect but to move the hearts of the people more and more towards the persecuted side. So precious were the holy Scriptures to those in whose hearts God had placed the love of his truth, and yet so severe were the laws against what were deemed to be perverted and heretical translations, that people went out into the woods and fields to read that blessed book, which, at least in the English tongue, was banished from their churches. One man was accused to his bishop of reading the English Bible in the fields; the evidence against another was, that he had been seen in the woods looking on a book; and it was reported in evidence against a third, that he had said, he trusted to see the day "when maids should sing the Scriptures at their wheels, and ploughmen at their plough." This was in A.D. 1519, the year before Luther was excommunicated by the pope, and only three years after he had first set himself to oppose the sale of indulgences. It was no wonder, if any man, who considered the probable effect to be produced by the ART OF PRINTING, now for nearly fifty years established in the country, should have expressed this hope. The power of this discovery in multiplying the facilities of obtaining knowledge was very soon felt in England; and it was easily foreseen that no prohibition could be effectual which was not seconded by public consent.

But it was not from the effect of the press upon the mass of the people, that the reforming party received its greatest impulse. It was much more importantly aided by those who now began to cultivate what was called the *new learning* at the universities. Erasmus had passed some time in England before the conclusion of the fifteenth century; and his genius and learning, spreading its influence wherever he was known, had kindled many sparks of emulation among English teachers and students. The Greek language, which had scarcely been understood by more than one or two

in a century for many ages, and by them, as Grostête and his friends, very imperfectly and in authors of little value, was now earnestly studied; and with it came better principles of reasoning, a more true judgment of the laws of nature and morals, and a more just discrimination of truth and error in matters of faith. Holy Scripture began to be studied in the original tongues. Among the friends of Erasmus was "ever-memorable DEAN COLET," the founder of St. Paul's school. About A.D. 1498 he had first revived at Oxford the practice of reading lectures upon Scripture, instead of Scotus and Thomas Aquinas. Being made dean of St. Paul's, his preaching there, and in Buckinghamshire also, where he had a church, was much frequented by those who had inherited the principles of the Lollards; and he did not escape suspicion of what was then called heresy. Archbishop Warham, however, was too good a man to lend a willing ear to malicious accusations, and Colet continued in his deanery. His diet was frugal, his life austere. At his meals, according to primitive practice, St. Paul's Epistles or Solomon's Proverbs were read by an attendant; and he expressed to Erasmus his dislike of the writings of Aquinas, who, he said, "had polluted Christ's holy doctrine with man's profane teaching."

What was done by Colet at Oxford was also done, probably with still greater effect, by George Stafford, divinity lecturer at Cambridge; from whom HUGH LATIMER, though at first strongly prejudiced against him, learned to lay aside the schoolmen, and to study the text of Scripture instead of their glosses. Latimer's preaching was as persuasive at Cambridge as it was afterwards popular at court. NICHOLAS RIDLEY, then a young man, was one of Latimer's hearers, and acknowledged his obligations to him. And it was at Pembroke Hall, as he declares in his pathetic farewell to his beloved college, written with his martyrdom in view, that he committed to memory, in their original language, all the epistles of St. Paul, and the other epistles of the New Testament.

It is important to observe, that the principal leaders of this new reforming party were not persons who merely inherited or adopted the opinions which still prevailed among the followers of Wycliffe. Doubtless those opinions had a material influence in disposing the public mind, as far as it was disposed, towards reformation: but the leaders of this party, and the principal agents in the success of reformation itself, were men who had prejudices to overcome of a directly opposite kind, and very few of these had as yet gone so far as to reject the novelty of transubstantiation, which they had been taught to receive as the primitive doctrine of the Church.

When the news of the movement in Germany was known in this country, the bishops who opposed reformation began to be more vigilant against what was still called Lollardy. And the king, then just entering on his prime of manhood, undertook to refute Luther's opinions, in a book, which he dedicated to the pope. This book was received with all possible deference by the papal court; and the king, who had studied Church-affairs and was fond of churchmen, was gratified by the unbounded applause with which his part in the controversy was welcomed. It was on this occasion that the pope bestowed upon him that remarkable title of Defender of the Faith, which has ever since been assumed by English sovereigns. It was not, indeed, altogether a new title; for Richard II. had frequently adopted it in his proclamations against Wyclffe and his party; and Henry IV. had once been styled "the Champion and chief Defender of the Orthodox Faith[1]," and Henry III. "the Defender of the Church." But it was now bestowed upon Henry VIII., in full conclave, by the pope himself. And, indeed, his book was no contemptible performance, and in some points he seems

[1] WILKINS, *Concil.* iii. 334. "Regis, tanquam pugilis, athletæ, et defensoris fidei orthodoxæ." A.D. 1411.

to have had the advantage of Luther. The majority of the clergy were but too ready to second the exertions of the king in what was held to be their own cause. The year after it was published, A.D. 1523, Cardinal Wolsey, the prime minister and pope's legate, was persuaded to consent that a visitation should take place at Cambridge of suspected persons; and some prosecutions took place; but the moderation of Tonstall, then bishop of London, for a time put off the danger. Soon after, the cause of reformation derived considerable accession of strength from the publication, A.D. 1526, of an English translation of the New Testament, by William Tindal—the first English translation that was printed, and the first that was made from the original. This was printed beyond sea. A clergyman, named Garret, who was afterwards burnt, was sent with a number of copies to Oxford. And when some bishops bought up this heretical work, to destroy it, the money which they gave furnished Tindal with the means of publishing a new and more correct edition. The price of Wycliffe's New Testament a hundred years before, we saw to be nearly three pounds sterling; but now the printed copies of Tindal's were sold for three shillings and sixpence. The effect of such a change may well be imagined. The way to judge of these prices is to compare them with wages of labour; and it appears from a law[1] of Henry VI., that a labourer's wages in the fifteenth century were threepence a day; so that little more than two weeks' wages would buy a poor man an English Testament in the reign of Henry VIII.

Such was the state of things in England on the eve of the great public struggle, which ended in the establishment of reformation. Ten years had passed (A.D. 1527), since the first publication of Luther's Theses, and Henry had been warmly engaged in controversy with him, when the quarrel arose between him and the

[1] 23 Hen. VI. c. 13.

pope about his domestic affairs. According to his own account, it was three years before this that he first began to entertain scruples as to his marriage with Catharine of Arragon, the daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain, and widow of his elder brother, Arthur, prince of Wales. Although the pope, Julius II., had granted a dispensation for this marriage, Warham, archbishop of Canterbury, had protested against it, as contrary to the law of God; and Henry VII., who at first promoted it, had caused his son to renounce the contract, and enjoined him on his death-bed not to venture upon it. The marriage took place notwithstanding; and more than one son having died in childhood, the king found himself, eighteen years after his marriage, with an only daughter, the Princess Mary, and with no prospect of further issue by his queen. It was in some sense a national object to have a direct heir to the throne, fresh as was the recollection of the wars of the Roses in the century before. But the desire of an heir was still further enhanced, when exception was made by two of the greatest princes of Europe, the Emperor Charles V., and Francis I. of France, to an alliance with the Princess Mary, on the ground that her legitimacy was doubtful, in consequence of the affinity between her parents. But if Henry, as is probable, began with a scruple about his marriage, it is certain that he very soon had other motives for wishing to be released from it. For, one year after his first overtures to the pope upon the subject, he appears to have been on most familiar terms with Anne Boleyn, the destined successor of Catharine in his throne. This young lady, the daughter of Sir Thomas Boleyn, at that time a private gentleman, was nobly allied both on her father's and mother's side, and was descended through the family of Lord Hoo and Hastings, from the Scottish kings. Having spent much of her time in the French court, she was, on her return, attached to the person of the queen, where, if Henry were already turning his mind towards another marriage, he had an opportunity

of being attracted by her charms. We are not concerned to defend his conduct; all we have to do, in the judgment we pass upon it, is to abstain from exaggerated censure. And if this be an equitable view of the course of his feelings on the subject, there still remains a heavy account against him. If he thought his marriage illegal, it did not follow that he was at liberty to marry another; still less to select another before the first tie was dissolved, even though there might be nothing which is called criminal in the connexion.

In the end of the year 1527, application was first made to the pope, on the king's behalf, to revoke the bull of Julius II., and declare the king's marriage void. The pope was desired to authorise Wolsey and another cardinal to try the cause in England, and to delegate to them full power to proceed to a definitive sentence. It was also requested that Cardinal Campegio might be selected as Wolsey's associate, to whom the king had given an English bishopric, and who was supposed to be devoted to his interest. Clement VII., the reigning pope, was at this time little better than a prisoner to the emperor, whose forces had taken Rome, and besieged him in the Castle of St. Angelo. So that, however willing to gratify the king of England, his fears withheld him from avowing it; for Charles V. was Catharine's nephew, and was now resolved to uphold the legality of her marriage. In the first place, therefore, the pope granted the commission that was asked, but with an express desire that it might not be acted upon until he should be more at liberty. He next suggested that the forces of the French king, who was allied with Henry, should move towards him, so as to give him an excuse for pretending to the emperor that he acted by compulsion in yielding to Henry's wishes. And then he privately advised that the king should marry another wife, and promised that he would confirm it. But this was thought too hazardous by the English counsellors, lest, when it was done, the pope should change his mind. Wolsey all the while urged the pope to proceed,

with an earnestness of entreaty, and even supplication, not consistent with his usual haughtiness. He more than once declared to him that he would lose England, if he did not comply. And it is clear, as well from this as from other circumstances, that the king had already conceived the design of renouncing the papal supremacy. The year before, he had agreed with the French king that each should govern his own Church, and not acknowledge any act of the Roman see, so long as the pope should be the emperor's prisoner; and not long after, they concerted a plan of setting up a patriarch of their own, who should stand in the same relation to the Churches of their kingdoms, which the patriarchs of Constantinople or Antioch hold to the countries that acknowledge them.

Campegio at length arrived in England (A.D. 1528), and brought with him, not only authority to himself and Wolsey to try the cause, but a bull to dissolve the marriage. But this was only a blind. He was allowed to shew it to the king and Wolsey, and then was privately instructed to destroy it. Fresh delays occurred while negotiations were carried on to obtain greater powers to the legates; and Campegio in the meantime attempted to prevail with the queen to renounce her claims and retire to a nunnery. Similar attempts had already been made on the part of the king, but in vain. For Henry, like many other people of low principles, had not discriminated between the complying and gentle character of his wife, and the high sense of dignity and self-respect inseparable from virtue. Catharine had been brought up in implicit obedience to the doctrine of the Church of Rome, and her dearest associations were connected with its services. When the court was at Greenwich, it is related of her that she used to rise at midnight to join in the devotions of the Franciscan convent. And thus attached by interest and affection to the papal authority, she declared that nothing short of the same power which had allowed her marriage should avail to dissolve it. The legates, therefore,

proceeded to open their commission, and cited the king and queen to appear before them on the 18th of June. On that day the king did not appear; but three days later, on the 21st of June, 1529, both king and queen obeyed the summons at the house of the Black Friars,—the same building, and probably the same apartment, in which the convocation had assembled which condemned the doctrines of Wycliffe.

Such a scene could not fail to excite the deepest interest. But popular feeling, as usual, was with the weaker party; and this feeling was probably enhanced by the course which the queen adopted. When her name was called, she did not answer; but arising from her place, came round to where the king was seated; and, kneeling before him, besought him to remember "that she was a woman in a foreign country; that even her own counsel were his subjects; and how could she expect justice in such a court? How had she disobliged him, that she was thus used? She was ever obedient to his humour; his wishes had been her will. She was his wife these twenty years, and had borne him several children: and he knew that her marriage with his brother was one of contract only. If he could charge her with breach of faith, she was willing to be dismissed with infamy; but if not, she asked for justice at his hands. Their parents were wise princes, and would be well advised ere they consented to this marriage. But as she could not trust her cause in such a court, she besought him to suspend the trial till she could consult her friends." With these words she left the court, and would not be induced to return, but left her cause to be defended by her counsel. On her side were Bishop Fisher of Rochester, who died for the papal supremacy; and Ridley, the uncle of the martyr of the English Reformation. On the king's side, though not actually employed as counsel, yet warmly engaged in the cause, in negotiations at Rome and in writing to defend it, were Gardiner and Bonner. The legates, having pronounced the queen contumacious, proceeded

with the cause; and on the 23rd of July it was supposed they were about to pronounce the sentence. But Campegio had other instructions. The emperor had prevailed with the pope to admit the queen's appeal to himself at Rome; and the legate, pretending that the cause could not go on during the vacation of the Roman courts, adjourned the proceedings till October. Meanwhile the citation to Rome arrived; and although the king, by virtue of his power of inhibiting bulls under the penalties of the *præmunire*, would not allow it to be executed, the authority of the legates was at an end, and Campegio prepared to return.

Henry had awaited the pope's decision now two years, and his temper was chafed by the delay. But this was not all: having an object to carry in which his passions were concerned, it appeared to him that the most effectual means to coerce the pope was by shewing a disposition to reject his authority. He had got a notion from English history, and from what he found of the actual state of the laws, of the independence of his crown; and he little deemed that in making use of these laws to compass his private purposes, he was an instrument in the hands of the Divine Providence of accomplishing a mighty revolution in ecclesiastical affairs. His first indignation was directed against Wolsey, who was deprived of his office of lord chancellor, and forced to surrender his palaces at Whitehall and Hampton Court, and all his wealth, into the hands of his master. Henry, like other spendthrifts, was fond of money, and often talked of it in his moments of relaxation; and Wolsey, who knew his character, hoped to satisfy him by a free surrender. But this was not enough. The king had called a parliament after an interval of seven years, and there an impeachment was preferred against the cardinal by some of the lords; in the first clause of which they recited the preamble of the act of *præmunire*, in which the clergy and parliament of Richard II. had affirmed that the kings of England have no earthly superior; and they alleged that the cardinal was within

the penalty of this statute for the exercise of his legatine functions. There were no fewer than forty-four clauses, each containing a separate charge; but they were all thrown out in the commons, through the zeal of Thomas Cromwell, a servant of Wolsey's, who, for this purpose, procured himself to be elected by the city of London, and whose affectionate adherence to his master commended him thenceforth to the notice of the king.

But the *præmunire* was not so easily disposed of: an indictment was brought upon it in the King's Bench; and to this indictment Wolsey pleaded guilty—a plea which involved the most important consequences, not to himself alone, but to the clergy and Church of England. The law required that no bull from Rome should be executed in England without the royal license, and the penalty was forfeiture of property and imprisonment during pleasure; so that if Wolsey had indeed neglected to obtain the king's license, he was within the statute. He affirmed at the time that he had not neglected to do so; and it is certain that in more than one instance he had obtained it, though possibly not to the full extent: but knowing Henry's impatience of resistance, he said he thought it the safer course to submit entirely, and throw himself on his mercy. And so for the time it seemed. The king granted him a most ample pardon; and once at least, during the same session, he ventured to take his seat in the House of Lords. But this gleam of favour was of short duration. He was ordered to repair to his diocese of York, which it seems he had never visited; for he had not yet been installed; and he set forth early in the spring of 1530, on his progress towards the north,—a signal instance of the instability of human greatness. It was but a year before, that he had exchanged the bishopric of Durham for that of Winchester; and about the same time that, on the report of the illness of Clement VII., the popedom itself, the long-cherished object of his ambition, had seemed within his grasp.

But another person now appears upon the stage, who was destined to have the most important influence upon the affairs of the Church in England. The king was returning from a progress which he made in the autumn of 1529, between the conclusion of the trial and the meeting of the parliament, when two of his attendants, Gardiner and Fox, lodging at the house of a gentleman at Waltham Cross, fell into conversation on the subject of the divorce with THOMAS CRANMER, who, having lost a fellowship at Cambridge by marriage, had, after the death of his wife, taken orders and become the tutor of this gentleman's sons, being restored at the same time to his fellowship. He expressed his opinion that the king should collect the judgments of the principal universities and divines of Europe, and that if they were in his favour, his own clergy might then decide the question. This was just what Henry was in search of; Wolsey had indeed before suggested to consult the universities, and some steps had been taken in it. But this was of little moment, when the pope was, after all, the last resort. But Cranmer's suggestion, originating from those very strong views of the royal supremacy which he maintained through life, supplied the link which was wanting; and Henry, whose mind was already alive to the point, seized it with eagerness. Cranmer was immediately sent for, and received with distinguished favour. He was employed to write in support of the divorce, according to the opinion he had formed and expressed before he could possibly have dreamed of royal favour, and was sent next year with Ann Boleyn's father, now made earl of Wiltshire, on an embassy to the pope, with whom negotiations were continued. The whole of this year was occupied in obtaining the opinions of various universities and divines, in which also Cranmer, with others, was engaged; and going into Germany to consult the Lutheran clergy, he married the niece of Osiander, one of their leading divines, though the laws of the Church at that time still enjoined celibacy on the clergy.

The autumn of this same year witnessed the conclusion of Wolsey's fate. Since his banishment from the court he had spent his time in such a way as to shew that he was alive to the duties of a Christian prelate, though he had hitherto neglected them. In his progress towards the north, at Peterborough Abbey, at Newark Castle, at Southwell Minster, at Newstead Abbey, he had won the favour of the people, and gained the respect of the clergy. And in his retirement at Cawood he spent his income in charity and hospitality, and his time in preaching to the poor, and promoting good feeling and kindness among the rich. He was about to be installed at York with something of primitive solemnity, when he was arrested the day before on a charge of high treason. Whether he had done any thing since his pardon to incur this charge is exceedingly uncertain. The king expressed great regret at his death, "wishing rather than twenty thousand pounds that he had lived[1];" and perhaps it was only a feint to work upon the pope. But it is a desperate game for princes to play with men's lives, and think they are in sport. The cardinal sickened in his way to London, and died at the Abbey of Leicester, Nov. 29, 1530. On his death-bed he was molested by an inquiry about some money which the king had learned that he had lately received; and it was on this occasion that he addressed to Kingston, lieutenant of the Tower, whose prisoner he was, those words which Shakspeare has embodied in a speech to Cromwell:—"If I had served God as diligently as I have done the king, he would not have given me over in my grey hairs. But this is the just reward that I must receive for my diligent pains and study that I have had to do him service; not regarding my service to God, but only to satisfy his pleasure." The conclusion of his message to the king (none of which, however, was delivered) was such as to show, that whatever might have been his reluctance

[1] CAVENDISH.

to persecute, he would certainly have opposed reformation with a high hand, had he remained in power. The manifold wisdom of God is made known even to the heavenly inhabitants, as they read the development of his providence in his dealings with his Church[1]. Much more ought we to acknowledge his hand as we see the instruments of his purposes successively exalted and removed.

The character of Wolsey has been drawn by many pens of the highest genius, and by the faithful historic muse of Shakspeare. Never, as Clarendon observes, was there a more remarkable instance of a man raised to distinction by his own industry and lively talent. Sprung from parents of the meanest class, he had been sent to the university, which he left for want of means, and for a time kept a poor school in the country. He was near thirty years of age before he was noticed; yet from such beginnings he rose to as great a height of worldly glory as a subject is capable of. He was able to converse and negotiate in the greatest courts in Christendom, and to be received into great familiarity and confidence with the greatest princes. If these high qualities had not been accompanied by two great vices, pride in his exaltation, and abjectness in his fall, he would have preserved his claim to dignity of character. But his pride, the natural tendency of persons of mean birth when suddenly exalted, made him offend all the great nobility, who conspired for his disgrace; and his abject spirit seems to have been the occasion of his death, when his outward honours were all lost, and he had not in himself that firmness which is only learnt by fixing the hope on a kingdom that cannot be removed.

The parliament met again in January, 1531; and the opinions of the universities and divines in favour of the divorce were immediately submitted to them. Six foreign universities, besides those of Oxford and Cambridge, had decided in the king's favour; to which may

[1] Eph. iii. 10.

be added a great number of divines in all parts of Europe, as well as the convocation of the English clergy. This body was now to take so important a part in the changes that were at hand, that it is necessary to say a word respecting it. By the constitution of the Catholic Church, every bishop may convene his clergy to a diocesan synod, and every archbishop may summon the bishops and clergy of his province to a provincial council. These meetings are deemed to constitute the representative Church in the diocese or district to which they belong, as a national synod or council represents a national Church; and a general council, assembled from the whole of Christendom, represents the Catholic or universal Church. The bishops in England have the power, like all other Catholic bishops, of calling such assemblies; but the kings by degrees adopted the practice of requiring them to convoke their clergy, not to a purely ecclesiastical synod, but to a meeting connected with the parliament, and exercising some temporal functions. This was called the Convocation, of which there was one for either province of Canterbury and York. These assemblies voted all the taxes which were paid by the clergy; and it was on this account that the kings had an interest in convening them. The archbishops still had the power to summon provincial councils; but as the convocations, being called in their name as well as the king's, were able to exercise the functions of a synod, the practice of holding any other councils had almost fallen into disuse, especially as it was discountenanced by the pope. Thus it came to pass that the convocations of the two provinces, which always sat at the same time with the parliament, were recognised as the synod of the Church in England.

We have seen that in the beginning of this reign the whole convocation of the province of Canterbury was cast in a *præmunire* for prosecuting Dr. Standish, and the members were forced to beg the king's pardon on their knees. But they were now to undergo a still

more important ordeal. It was alleged that they had incurred the same penalty by admitting the legatine authority of Wolsey; and although they could not have done otherwise when he was in the plenitude of his power, it was held that as he had pleaded guilty, his guilt involved them all. An action was brought against them in the King's Bench; and Henry determined to avail himself of the predicament in which they were thus placed, not only to extort a heavy subsidy, but also to obtain a recognition of his supremacy in ecclesiastical affairs.

The royal supremacy was the turning-point of the English Reformation; for by this principle the papal power was abolished, and the Church left free, as far as Rome was concerned, for the admission of those alterations in religion which actually followed. But this principle admits of being understood in very different ways. In opposition to the claim of the pope to be supreme in all religious affairs, and even to make or annul the laws of the countries which own his supremacy, it had been long ago contended by the English parliament, and admitted by the English clergy, that their king within his dominions has no earthly superior. This was, therefore, already so clearly the law of the land, that the clergy could not deny it. And so when Henry demanded that they should acknowledge him the head of the Church, no one could refuse to admit it in the sense in which it had been already admitted. But it was evident that such an admission, in such hands as his, was capable of a very much wider interpretation. It is one thing to say that the sovereign alone is the fountain of all law within his own dominions, so that no laws shall be made without his consent;—it is quite another to affirm that he has the right to make such laws as he shall please touching religious affairs. It was in this latter sense that the clergy dreaded the royal supremacy, and were unwilling to acknowledge it. On the other hand, the king persisted that he would continue the prosecution against them, unless

they would *submit* to his terms; which were, not that they should formally pass any resolution on this point, as if it were a new thing, but that in voting the subsidy which he required, they should acknowledge him the sole protector and head of the Church. After three days it passed in the convocation of Canterbury, with the addition of the words, "as far as is consistent with the law of Christ;" and, with this limitation, the address in which it was embodied, voting a subsidy at the same time of 100,000*l.*, was signed by the whole convocation, including Warham the archbishop, and Fisher bishop of Rochester.

Some months afterwards a similar admission was made by the convocation of the province of York, where, however, Tonstall, now bishop of Durham, protested against it. They also voted a subsidy of 18,000*l.*

This act of the convocation has since been known as the "submission of the clergy." But it may be observed, that the sense in which that expression has since been understood is somewhat different from that in which it was used at the time. It then was taken to imply that the clergy submitted to the prosecution under the *præmunire;* whereas it has come to be used as if they had then for the first time submitted, as to a new thing, to the acknowledgment of the royal supremacy.

This submission was followed by an act of parliament (January, 1532), to abolish those enormous payments to the pope, by way of annates and the like, which had, ever since the time of Wycliffe, and before, been a chief subject of remonstrance on the part of English statesmen. And this law was accompanied by clauses sufficiently significant of the temper both of the king and the nation. For it was provided, that if the pope should refuse to consecrate bishops in consequence, the king might order the archbishop, or, on his refusal, any two bishops, to do so; and that if the pope should place the kingdom under an interdict, the

king should cause the sacraments and other rites of the Church to go on as usual. These provisions were very similar to those of the pragmatic sanction in France; but as the negotiations were still continued with Rome, a liberty was reserved to the king of making void or confirming any part of this statute within two years. At the same time a further concession was exacted from the clergy, and further restrictions imposed upon them. The parliament had complained in a "supplication," which they presented to the king, that the clergy exercised a power of making laws, by way of canons, independent of the state; so as to be but half-subjects. This complaint being submitted to the convocation, the clergy offered to bind themselves to make no laws *which do not affect the faith* without the king's concurrence. But this was not deemed sufficient; and at length they were brought to consent that they would not enact or put in ure (that is, execute) any new canons whatever without the royal license. This point completed the submission of the clergy, and was in fact essential to it, and a necessary consequence of it. And by this means the clergy of the Church in England, who had hitherto, for some ages at least, claimed a right to make their own laws, without waiting for the king's assent, and by so doing had introduced the laws of the pope since he obtained the supremacy over western Christendom, became once more subject to the crown[1].

---

[1] When it is said, that the Church of England had "for some ages" only, and not from the first, made its own laws, and that by the submission of the clergy it became subject "once more" to the crown, the theory is adopted, which has been that of common lawyers since the Reformation. But there are not wanting those who deny its historical truth; and, like all theories invented afterwards to suit a particular state of things, it is probably only partially correct. This, however, is clear, that before the Conquest and the subsequent separation of the two jurisdictions, the Church-laws were made under the authority of the king and the English bishops, not under the pope.

CHAPTER XV.

STATE OF PARTIES—CRANMER ARCHBISHOP—KING EXCOMMUNICATED BY THE POPE—ACTS OF PARLIAMENT RENOUNCING PAPACY—ENGLISH BIBLE.

> Our mirror is a blessed book,
> Where out from each illumined page,
> We see one glorious image look,
> All eyes to dazzle and engage.
> * * * * * * *
> O happy hours of heav'nward thought,
> How richly crown'd, how well improved,
> In musing o'er the lore he taught,
> In waiting for the Lord he loved.
>
> *Christian Year—St. Bartholomew.*

THE feelings and opinions of individuals do not often occupy a prominent place in the history of events; yet they influence those events as much as they are influenced by them. It is, therefore, a very interesting question, what was the state of religious parties at the time that Henry obtained the renunciation of the Papal authority from his clergy and his parliament.

It is important to observe, that the principal leaders of the reforming party were not persons who inherited, or had adopted, the opinions which still prevailed among the followers of Wycliffe. Doubtless those opinions had a material influence in disposing the public mind, as far as it was disposed, towards a reformation. But the leaders of this party, and the principal agents in the Reformation itself, were men who had prejudices to overcome of a directly opposite kind; and very few of these had yet gone so far as to reject the novelty of transubstantiation, which they had been taught to receive as the primitive doctrine of the Church. It is also remarkable how few were able, in the first instance,

to endure the trials to which they were exposed, and how bitter, in many cases, were their regrets when they had been overborne by fear so as to retract their opinions. The revival of the study of Holy Scripture at both Universities had a material influence, long before the obstacles to an authorised translation were overcome, and Tindal's version, though denounced by the bishops, was read by high and low. On the whole, it was a time of much excitement and religious anxiety, especially among those of the clergy who began, as was their duty, by taking the Church for their guide, but by degrees found themselves unable to reconcile many things in her teaching with the word of God.

Of these one of the most remarkable was Thomas Bilney, Fellow of Trinity Hall, in Cambridge; a devout student of Scripture, and a man of learning, whose meek and gentle temper commended the way in which he expressed his opinions to those around him. He had been accused a short time before the fall of Wolsey, for preaching against vows, pilgrimages, and invocation of saints; and he was suspected of approving the doctrines of Luther, which, however, he allowed to have been fairly refuted by Bishop Fisher. He expressed his wishes for reformation in some points with great moderation, not condemning all the laws which had been received on the authority of popes into this kingdom, but wishing their number lessened; not pronouncing against the use of images, if the worship was paid to Christ, whom they represented; but he earnestly desired that the people should have the Scriptures read in churches in England, and be taught the Creed and Lord's Prayer in their own language; for want of which, he said, he had found many persons ignorant even of such an article of faith as the resurrection of the dead. From the depositions taken against him, he was convicted of heresy before Tonstall, then bishop of London; and, by the persuasion of some of his friends, he recanted, and according to the penance enjoined in such cases, he stood during a

sermon at Paul's Cross with a faggot on his shoulder, signifying the sentence he had escaped by his recantation.

What followed is as affecting as it is instructive. The remorse he suffered was such as almost to deprive him of reason; and he seemed to read in every page of Scripture his own sentence of condemnation. When at length he regained his fortitude, after spending two years at Cambridge in preparing himself for his fate, he went down into his native county of Norfolk; and there preaching privately among his friends, and on some occasions more openly, he was apprehended by order of Bishop Nix, who had long presided over that see, and was a cruel persecutor. He was burnt in a place called, from the cruelties perpetrated there, the Lollards' Pit, near Norwich, in July, 1532.

The calm Christian serenity with which he suffered had a strong effect on those who witnessed this closing scene; among whom was Matthew Parker, afterwards, under Queen Elizabeth, elected to be Archbishop of Canterbury. It was evident that the reformed doctrines were now beginning to be preached by men of better education and of more enlightened minds than the poor despised Lollards. Among the things which Bilney mentioned in his dying words to the people, he spoke of it as an offence which he repented of, that he had preached in a church where he had no license, by request of the curate. And he professed his belief, "that only priests duly ordained by bishops have the the keys, by whose power they bind and loose the penitent, if they do not err in the use of them; and that the unworthiness of the ministers does not diminish nor take away the efficacy of the sacraments, as long as those ministers are suffered in the Church." This was very different doctrine from that ruder zeal of some of these poor sufferers, who had taught that the ministerial acts of bishops and priests were not effectual without holiness of life; and so that a pious layman might be more a priest than a vicious clergyman.

Bilney had become acquainted with Latimer at Cam-

bridge, and found him somewhat prejudiced against Philip Melancthon, whose name and writings now began to be known in England. Bilney, seeing the ingenuousness of Latimer's character, asked him to receive his confession, for it was customary with the clergy to choose their own confessor. The development of the state of Bilney's feelings had the result which he intended with his single-hearted and zealous friend; and Latimer had so far adopted these views, as to become a conspicuous preacher of them at Cambridge, though as yet he escaped prosecution. But being preferred, about A.D. 1530, to the cure of West Kingston, in Wiltshire, and continuing there the same course, he was cited before the convocation in 1532, in the same session in which that body made their submission to the crown. He appealed to the king, but his appeal was rejected; and refusing to sign all the articles required of him, he was excommunicated, and imprisoned at Lambeth. By degrees he was brought to sign some of them, and to beg pardon for having preached against the rest; and at length he acknowledged that he had erred both in doctrine and discretion; on which the mild archbishop was glad to dismiss him without further censure.

He was probably guided in this course by the cautions he had received from Bilney; and there is no circumstance more satisfactory in the lives and characters of these leaders in the cause of reformation, than the care and circumspection with which they examined the grounds of the belief which they embraced. Latimer's assent was given to two articles; one asserting the lawfulness of keeping the Lent fast, and other fasts of the Church; the other, "that it is laudable and profitable that the venerable images of the crucifix and other saints should be had in the Church as a remembrance, and to the honour and worship of Jesus Christ and his saints." If he had preached against the fasts of the Church, we may conclude he now found himself in error; for no such doctrine appears in his sermons which have been preserved. On the subject of images,

it is likely that he thought the practice had led to idolatry, but he did not think it in itself unlawful to have images or pictures in churches. His rule of acting in this case may be learnt from his own words: "I would be loath to suffer death, unless it were for necessary articles of my belief,"—words of sound instruction, especially to those who may be found at all times too ready to disturb the peace of the Church, by their adherence to some private opinion or indifferent practice, by which weak consciences are offended. He showed the same principle shortly after, in a conference which he held with James Baynham, a gentleman of Gloucestershire, then a prisoner in Newgate on a charge of heresy, who was condemned and burnt in Smithfield, with Byfield, a monk of Bury St. Edmund's, during the same year. He desired Baynham strictly to examine his motives and opinions, to beware of vain-glory, and to consider "that it was not lawful for a man to consent to his own death, unless he had a right cause to die in." When he heard him say, that one of the opinions which he was charged with was, that Becket was a traitor, and no true martyr—for he had found in an old chronicle that this prelate had borne arms against his prince, and provoked foreign princes to invade the realm,—"Well," replied Latimer, "but this is no cause at all worthy for a man to take his death upon; for it may be a lie, as well as a true tale: and in such a doubtful matter it were mere madness for a man to jeopard his life." He then said that he had also spoken against purgatory and satisfactory masses; upon which Latimer acknowledged that he might do well to die rather than consent to doctrines opposed to the truth of Scripture. So carefully did this honest and humble man proceed in establishing his own conscience and that of his fellow-sufferers. In the mean time, his own life was in continued peril. He went down to Bristol, and there preached in his familiar style as before. His preaching was soon reported to the convocation, where Gardiner moved that a copy of his late recantation

should be sent down into those parts, in the hope of counteracting the effect of his sermons. But his simple eloquence became only the more touching, when he publicly bewailed his own weakness, and confessed that he had not constantly maintained what he believed.

Archbishop Warham died in August, 1532. He was, as Erasmus sums up his character, a man of learning and of mild goodness, and both in morals and piety a worthy prelate. But that for which he is chiefly memorable is, that under his primacy the subjection of the Church of England to the See of Rome was renounced, with his full consent and concurrence, and without any intention of a separation from the true Catholic Church of Christ[1]. Henry determined to give the vacant archbishopric to Cranmer, who was then in Germany, and sent to recall him, without informing him of his purpose. He was at that time a private clergyman, and scarcely four years had passed since his first introduction to the king. But it was not unusual in those days to raise men at once to the highest stations, and this king was fond of doing so. Cranmer, when he had notice from his friends of the king's intention, was in no haste to put himself in the way of such promotion[2]. He delayed his return to England for seven weeks, hoping that Henry would change his mind; and it was not till he had received a second message, that he seems to have determined, not with-

---

[1] Warham was a great patron of learning, and endeavoured to prevail with Erasmus to accept of preferment in England. On his refusal he gave him a pension out of the living of Herne, in Kent. which he presented to another person to hold with that condition.—Cole's MSS. *Br. Museum.*

[2] It has been supposed, on the authority of a letter of Erasmus, (Sir H. Ellis, Letter 117, 1st Series,) that the king offered to make Cranmer Lord Chancellor also, Sir Thomas More, who succeeded Wolsey, having resigned. But it seems rather that the offer referred to was made to Warham, who had been Chancellor before Wolsey.

out reason, that a higher hand than that of an earthly king was visible in the series of events which, without his own seeking, and in the course of his plain and daily duties, had brought him into the way of such promotion[1].

But an obstacle occurred. The law, which took away the payment of annates to the pope, had authorised the king to cause his bishops to be consecrated without the pope's consent. But this was only in case the pontiff should proceed to extremities, by excommunication and interdict; and as he had not yet done so, the usual form of appointment was not changed. It was the custom for all bishops to take two oaths—one to the pope, and the other to the king. In the first they swore "to be faithful and obedient to St. Peter and the holy Church of Rome, and to the pope and his canonical successors;" in the second they declared, "that they utterly renounced all such clauses, words, sentences, and grants, which they had or might have of the pope, that might be prejudicial to the king's authority." There had been an alteration made in the first oath some centuries before by Pope Hildebrand, which made the inconsistency greater than before. For whereas the original form required all bishops to swear to observe "the rules of the holy fathers," he had thought fit to add to those words, "the royalties of St. Peter." The inconsistency of these two professions, apparent in itself, was now more glaring when the Church had just renounced the papal supremacy; and Cranmer, who foresaw, and probably wished for, some

[1] He has been accused of "loitering at taverns," when Gardiner and Fox had that conversation with him at Waltham Cross, which being repeated by them to the king, brought him into Henry's notice. But this is a mistake, arising from inattention to the different customs of different times. Gardiner and Fox did not lodge at an inn on their journey, but at the house of a gentleman, to whose sons Cranmer was tutor; and he was come away from Cambridge with his pupils to their father's house, on account of an infectious fever.

further change in the relations of this country with Rome, objected to take the oath to the pope. It was suggested, by the lawyers, that he should take it under a protest that he did not thereby understand any thing contrary to his duty to his king and country. To this course he assented; the protest was three times made and recorded, first in the chapter-house of St. Stephen's, Westminster, and twice in public at the high altar of that collegiate church, before his consecration, and before he was invested with the pall; and a clause was added, "that he did not intend by that oath, or any other, to restrict himself from full liberty of saying and advising whatever might concern the reformation of religion, or of the good of the state of England, or of executing such reforms as should seem to be required in the English church." He received the papal provision, confirming his appointment, by an instrument dated February 21, 1533, and was consecrated on the 30th of March following.

Whatever may be thought of this protest, there is evidence that his own mind was satisfied by it, and that he looked back to it as an act by which he preserved his loyalty and a good conscience. For long afterwards, when he was about to be brought to his trial under Queen Mary, he gave it as an objection to a bishop who was appointed for his judge, that he had taken two contrary oaths, to the queen and to the pope, on one of which he must needs be perjured; and when this bishop, Brooks, bishop of Gloucester, reproached him with it on his trial, he fully justified his own conduct, as having done every thing which became him, in making known his scruples to the king, and having taken the best legal advice to prevent any appearance of deceit or collusion[1].

[1] It appears from his own account afterwards, that the first suggestion of the lawyers was, that he should send a proxy to Rome, who should take the oaths in his name. But this he at once rejected as disingenuous; and when Brooks and the rest

One of the first acts of Cranmer after he became archbishop, was an attempt to save the life of a person convicted of heresy. This was John Frith, a young man of much learning and good character, who had belonged to Wolsey's college at Oxford, and who was condemned by Stokesly, bishop of London, in conjunction with Gardiner and Longland. As this was the last conviction under the law of Henry IV. which authorised the bishops to condemn to the flames on their own authority, so was this person the first of the new reforming party who ventured to deny the dogma of transubstantiation. He did not attempt, as the Lutherans and Wickliffites did, to account for the doctrine of Christ's presence in the Eucharist by any reasoning of his own. He believed that Christ is really present in the Holy Communion, according to his own words, only he denied his corporeal presence, and said we ought to be content to believe him present, without pretending to explain the manner of it. And he fortified this opinion by a passage from the writings of Gelasius, an early bishop of Rome, who had said, "That the elements of bread and wine being consecrated to be the sacraments of the body and blood of Christ, *do not cease to be bread and wine in substance, but continue in their own proper nature*."

Cranmer at that time thought Frith in error, but he sent for him several times in the hope of convincing him, and having failed to do so, he could not prevent the law from taking its course; but two of the archbishop's officers, who had him in custody, offered to let him escape, and it can scarce be doubted that they had Cranmer's directions to do so. Frith, however, had made up his mind with the deliberation of a genuine martyr. He was a friend of Tindal's, and was encouraged by him not to flinch from maintaining the truth. So long as he could remain at large unquestioned he

---

reproached him for his conduct on this occasion, he asked them "what he could do more in the case," to which they made no answer.—*Works*, iv. 116, Letter to Queen Mary; letter ccxcix.

had endeavoured to do so, but having once fallen into the power of the persecuting party, he would not avoid their sentence. He was brought to the stake in July, 1533, in conjunction with a young man in humble life, who persisted that he believed as he did, and when a wretched priest exhorted the spectators not to pray for them any more than they would for a dog, Frith's only answer was by a prayer for the pardon of his persecutors. It is most remarkable, that Cranmer's amiable and gentle nature should have brought him into communication with Frith at such a moment, when we consider that the doctrine he held on the Eucharist is the very doctrine adopted afterwards by Cranmer himself, and now held by the Church of England, in accordance, as we believe, with the true Church Catholic, and that Cranmer should have made use of the writings of this very person, as he himself acknowledged, in his own controversy with Gardiner on the subject[1].

One other sentiment of the new archbishop must here be noticed. Many years afterwards he declared his opinion, that "it pertains not to private subjects to reform things, but quietly to suffer that they cannot amend." And it was doubtless under this view of his duty that he now thought himself justified in aiding the inclinations of his sovereign to modify the relations of his country to the see of Rome. It was not the weakness of a yielding temper, but the patient spirit of a Christian watching the providential hand of God, and labouring to overrule for good the wayward temper

[1] We are indebted for the interesting fact of Cranmer's interview with Frith to a letter published by Sir H. Ellis, 1st Series, Letter 114, MS. Harl. 6148. It is from Cranmer to Hawkins, ambassador to the emperor, describing the coronation of Ann Boleyn; and it establishes two other facts besides this, of almost equal importance, namely, that Ann Boleyn was not married until about January, 1533, instead of November preceding, as is commonly said; and that Cranmer, so far from marrying them, was not even present, and did not know of it till a fortnight afterwards.

of his master. Nor did he close his mind against the religious questions which were now so generally discussed. He left behind him many volumes of notes and extracts from the Fathers and ancient authors, whose writings he consulted for their opinion, so that he was enabled to fortify the result of his own investigation of Scripture truth, by his knowledge of the tenets of the early Church. And that which he did himself he encouraged in others, and was well rewarded. Soon after he became archbishop, he promoted Ridley to the living of Herne, in Kent. Ridley was then, like himself, an anxious enquirer after truth, though still retaining the Romish doctrine on the subject of the Sacrament. But it was here that, in the fulfilment of his pastoral duties, assiduously preaching the gospel to his flock, he became convinced by the writings of Bertram, before mentioned, that the doctrine of Innocent III. was a novelty and an error. Satisfied that the Church of our Anglo-Saxon forefathers, the contemporaries of Bertram, had not held that which the Roman Church would impose upon mankind as primitive and Catholic truth, Ridley was eventually the happy instrument of bringing over the archbishop to the same conviction, as the latter publicly acknowledged on his trial at Oxford, though this change in his views did not take place until some years later. Thus it is that the obedient fulfilment of our plain duties is the way by which God will lead us into all truth.

On the 25th of January, 1533, Henry had married Ann Boleyn, thus acting on that advice which the Pope had given him at first, not to wait for a divorce, but to marry another wife. Cranmer was not present at the marriage, but soon after he became archbishop, he wrote to the king, to represent the scandal that would arise if his first marriage were not formally annulled, and the convocation having decided that a marriage with a brother's widow is unlawful, he received a license to adjudge the cause, and cited both parties to Dunstable, near to which place, at Ampthill,

Catharine was living. She refused to obey the summons, not accepting any other judge but the Pope, and Cranmer gave sentence, pronouncing the marriage null and void from the beginning,—a sentence which may have contributed to his own death afterwards, from the resentment felt by the Spanish counsellors of Mary, for the disgrace thus done to a princess of their own. Even at the time when the sentence was given, great fears were entertained. The popular feeling was strong in favour of Catharine, and Cranmer confesses he should have been perplexed how to act, if she had actually appeared in his court[1].

This step was highly resented at Rome, and was immediately disallowed; upon which the king and the archbishop appealed to a general council, and Bonner was sent on the part of the king to deliver his appeal to the pope. And yet, but a short time after, the pope was on the point of acceding to Henry's wishes. The French king, Francis I., sincerely promoted them, and the Archbishop of Paris had by his desire brought the pope to consent, that if Henry would recal his resolution of renouncing the supremacy of Rome, he would give him a favourable trial, and exclude the imperial party. A day was appointed for Henry's answer; but in the meantime it was reported at Rome that the English court made a sport of the papal conclave, and that the king was urging on further measures of hostility in parliament. The appointed day arrived, and no answer came; upon which the conclave, on the 24th of March, 1534, hastily and in anger proceeded to a final sentence, pronouncing the marriage of Catharine valid, and the king excommunicate if he should refuse to take her back as his wife.

The parliament had met early in the year 1534, and the king, without awaiting the decision of the pope, had proceeded as if there had been no negotiation in

---

[1] Letter xii.

hand with the papal court. The bishops preached in turn every Sunday at St. Paul's Cross, in favour of the royal supremacy, and Latimer was enforcing the same topic with all his eloquence at Bristol. And now that series of laws was passed, by which the papal authority was renounced and superseded. First, the law of Henry IV. was repealed, by which heretics might be burnt without waiting for the king's writ, and the power of the bishops in convicting heretics was restrained. The offenders were still, indeed, to suffer death by fire, but by a less arbitrary mode of proceeding, as has been above-mentioned. Next, the submission of the clergy was confirmed by an act of the legislature[1]; they were impeded from making new canons for themselves without the king's sanction; and the crown was empowered to appoint a commission of thirty-two persons, half clergy and half laymen, to compile a new body of ecclesiastical laws, revising the old canons, and rejecting such as the altered situation of the Church made no longer applicable. This was a favourite project of Cranmer's, which he afterwards renewed, as we shall find, in the reign of Edward VI. But this restriction of the clergy from making canons, necessary as it may have been at the time, in order to restore the due influence of the crown and the legislature in ecclesiastical affairs, has had results which could not then have been anticipitated. For it has been held that they cannot deliberate on any canons without the royal licence, and thus by withholding such licence the crown has suppressed, now for more than a century, the ecclesiastical synods altogether.

Next came the law to settle the election of bishops[2]; which is the more important, as it is by the same law that these appointments are regulated in the present day. We have seen already something of the changes which had taken place in these elections, by which the

---

[1] 25 Henry VIII. c. 19. [2] 25 Hen. VIII. c. 20.

power of the cathedral chapter or convent had been reduced almost to a nullity. Edward III. claimed the right to nominate, on the ground that the kings, his ancestors, had "founded the Church of England in the estate of prelacy;" and a similar claim had been preferred by Edward I. What was the meaning of this claim may be illustrated by the mode of election in the case of an abbot or prior. First, the convent applied to the "founder" or patron, (for the heir of the founder had always the same title) for *leave to elect;* and when the election had taken place, the founder's consent was asked, and if the house was not exempted by the pope, he wrote to the bishop to confirm it. The kings of England, therefore, claiming to be the founders of all bishoprics, assumed a right to proceed in the same way, and when their leave was asked to elect a bishop, it was but another step to claim a right of nomination also. But the formal election had always been in the hands of the cathedral chapter, whether they were monks, as at Canterbury, or a dean and canons, as in London and York; and while the pope's consent was necessary, he might always over-rule the choice—and in fact for a long time had always done so, appointing by his own provision, as it was called, even when he did not change the name of the person recommended by the king and elected by the clergy. It was, therefore, now enacted, that on every vacancy the king should grant a license as usual to the chapter to elect a new bishop, called a *congé d'élire*, with a letter bearing the name of the person to be chosen, which was no more than had been for some time accustomed, but it was added, that if the chapter should refuse to elect the person so named, or the bishops to consecrate him when elected, they should incur the penalty of the statute of *præmunire*. It was at the same time forbidden that any bishop should be presented to the pope for confirmation in his see.

This act, therefore, did not make an alteration in the actual *form* of proceeding, except as regards the confirmation by the pope. But by making it all but

imperative to adopt the nomination of the crown, it introduced a vast change in point of fact. The ostensible object being to prevent the pope from interfering, it may perhaps have been necessary at first to confirm the alleged right of the king to name the person who should be elected. But this was not the ancient custom of the English Church in the election of bishops; and it is one thing to allow of a nomination by the representative of the founder, but quite another to constrain the Church into the adoption of the nominee. It is the first article of *Magna Charta*, that the Church is to enjoy its liberty in its elections,—a liberty which Lord Coke declared to be most worthy to be retained. We must therefore consider it upon its own merits, and not defend it, as some writers have done, as a mere restitution of the customary and undoubted rights of the crown. The Anglo-Saxon bishops in early times were appointed by the primates of the two provinces; and after the Conquest, the bishops in some cases appointed their own primate. It then became a disputed right between the bishops and the cathedral clergy; and the kings interfered, and sometime appointed, till the pope's usurpation fixed the course to be pursued, as has been already detailed. As regards the practice which has resulted from this change, all that can be said is, that when the ministers of the crown are influenced by pure motives and guided by wise discretion, and pay a just regard to the wishes of the Church in these appointments, the choice is perhaps likely to be best placed in their hands. But though a greater evil was removed, and the natural alliance of the Church with a Christian state was thus properly restored, it is plain that the act itself, like most of the other reforms of Henry's reign, only transferred the power from a priestly to a regal master; and it has proved, at some periods since, the means of making the English sees a source of patronage to unworthy statemen, and filling them with needy courtiers and men of no public capacity, rather than learned and diligent prelates and true fathers of the Church. Public

opinion, however, may do much to correct this evil, and prevent such an abuse of trust. And when the affairs of state have been managed by such master-minds as Burleigh and Clarendon, the Church has prospered under the counsels of its wisest and best priests,

> whom, shunning power and place,
> Their lowly minds advanced to kingly grace.

Other acts were passed in this and the following session, abolishing all payments to Rome for dispensations and faculties, and forbidding all persons to go out of the kingdom, to attend any council or synod, without permission from the crown. The king was also declared supreme head of the Church of England[1]; and the *annates*, which had before been taken from the pope, were now given to the king.

At the same time the convocation ordered the appeal of the Church of England from the pope to a general council to be affixed to every church; and the whole body of clergy, as with one consent, signed their names to the renunciation of the pope's authority. "The bishop of Rome," it was stated in their declaration, "hath not any more authority conferred upon him by God in holy Scripture, in this realm of England, than any other foreign bishop." Bishops, deans and chapters, monasteries and parish priests, all concurred in this measure; and near two hundred instruments, bearing their signatures, are now or were lately extant. All the bishops also, except Fisher, including Gardiner and Tonstall, took an oath to the king as head of the

---

[1] This title gave some offence at the time, and the name of supreme Governor was substituted by Queen Elizabeth and other sovereigns. It is fair to give Cranmer's explanation of it. He understood it to mean, "Head of all the people of England, as well ecclesiastical as temporal; head and governor of his people, which are the visible Church. In the publication of his style," he said, "there was never other thing meant." JENKYNS'S *Cranmer*, iv. 117.

Church; and these acts of the national Church, still holding Catholic doctrines, and professing to remain in Catholic communion, with this appeal from the pope to a free general council, continue to preserve on record the justification of our division from foreign Churches; the guilt of which must lie with those who refuse our communion, because we will not restore an usurped authority, rather than with those who shook it off.

Another law was made, at the close of this year, to regulate the appointment of suffragan or coadjutor bishops. This was the revival of an old custom in the Anglo-Saxon period, when the archbishop had usually a suffragan bishop at the old church of St. Martin, in the suburbs at Canterbury, who in the absence of the archbishop, or in the vacancy of the see, took his place in ordinations and all other episcopal functions. But Lanfranc, on the death of the bishop who held this office in his time, instead of appointing another, introduced an officer at Canterbury, not of episcopal rank, with the title of Archdeacon, after which, when the see of Canterbury was vacant, the monks of St. Augustine's took to themselves authority to act as in the place of the archbishop. Similar officers being established in other dioceses, the use of coadjutor bishops seemed to be in some degree superseded. Yet the office was far from being discontinued, for Warham had a suffragan at Canterbury, and in the end of the preceding century, Bishop Smyth had a coadjutor for the diocese of Lincoln. And the episcopal character of these bishops was so completely recognised, that they were constantly employed in the consecration of the diocesans. But as it was necessary, according to the primitive Church, that every bishop should be appointed to some particular see, it was now provided that certain places should be the sees of "suffragan" bishops, and that any diocesan bishop who might wish for a coadjutor, might present

[1] 26 Hen. VIII. c. 14.

two persons to the king for his selection; that the person so selected should be consecrated to one of these sees, and exercise such part of the duties as his diocesan should delegate to him. By this law, which is still in force, twenty-five places are named as sees of suffragan bishops:—Thetford, Ipswich, Colchester, Dover, Guildford, Southampton, Taunton, Shaftsbury, South Molton, Marlborough, Bedford, Leicester, Gloucester, Shrewsbury, Bristol, Penrith, Bridgwater, Nottingham, Grantham, Hull, Huntingdon, Cambridge, Berwick, St. Germain's, and the Isle of Wight. Two of these, Gloucester and Bristol, were soon after erected into diocesan bishoprics. Cranmer endeavoured to follow out the practice of the Anglo-Saxon Church, by nominating the prior of St. Augustine's to be his suffragan of Dover; and there were nine or ten others consecrated to some of the other sees, one of whom, the suffragan of Bedford, afterwards officiated at the consecration of Archbishop Parker. It has often been regretted, that a plan so requisite to the full efficiency of the first order of the ministry in the Church of England, and now more than ever needed, from the great extent of sees and increase of population, has never been revived.

While these things were passing in parliament, A.D. 1534, the convocation agreed to a still more important measure. On Cranmer's motion, they voted an address to the king for an English translation of the Bible; a step which was worthy to be the first act of a National Church on becoming emancipated from the dominion of the see of Rome. Gardiner and all his party opposed it, alleging that the indiscriminate use of the Scriptures in the vulgar tongue has a tendency to promote heresy. But the assembly decided in favour of it, and the king was persuaded to assent by the influence of his new queen, who favoured the reformed doctrine, and ventured to possess a copy of Tyndal's interdicted translation[1]. The

[1] Her copy of Tyndal's Bible, bearing her initials as Queen, A.R., is now in the British Museum. There is also extant a

work itself was not accomplished until about four years later; but the principle, that the Church should put the Bible into the hands of all the people, was already carried, when the clergy had moved for it, and the king had acceded to their petition.

About the same time, Cranmer adopted a new style in his title as archbishop. His predecessors had called themselves Primates of all England and "Legates of the Apostolic See:" instead of which he described himself as Primate of all England and "Metropolitan;" a style not altogether new, but which having been assumed on such an occasion, and being still retained by his successors, may be in some degree equivalent to that of Patriarch of the English Church.

The party which favoured reformation was now strengthened by the promotion of Latimer to the see of Worcester, and Shaxton to that of Salisbury, of which two Italian Cardinals, Ghinucci and Campegio, were deprived by act of parliament. The influence of the queen was visible in these appointments. Shaxton, indeed, as we shall find, disappointed the hopes of his friends. But there were others, who, not professing to favour Luther, or as yet agreed how far they would go in their plans of reform, were disposed to concur in some changes for the promotion of a better state of things. These were Goodrich bishop of Ely, Barlow of St. David's, Hilsey of Rochester, all promoted about this time; and Edward Fox bishop of Hereford, a man of zeal and learning, who would have been one of Cranmer's most valuable coadjutors, had not his life been cut short in the midst of these trying scenes.

---

letter from her to Cromwell, interceding for Richard Herman, a merchant at Antwerp, who had been put out of the English house there, in the time of Wolsey, for helping in the publication of it.

CHAPTER XVI.

DEATH OF MORE AND FISHER—MEASURES OF PAUL III. AND CARDINAL POLE—SUPPRESSION OF THE MONASTERIES.

Threats come, which no submission may assuage,
No sacrifice avert, no power dispute:
The taper shall be quench'd, the belfries mute,
And 'midst their choirs, unroof'd by selfish rage,
The warbling wren shall find a leafy cage,
The gadding bramble hang her purple fruit,
And the green lizard and the gilded newt
Lead unmolested lives, and die of age.
WORDSWORTH, *Eccl. Sketches.*

GREAT changes in the social order of a country have seldom been made without violence; and, as was long since observed by a profound historian, a domestic reform in the constitution is commonly as dearly bought as a foreign conquest[1]. This was now to be exemplified in England. The change that had been made in the laws, and especially those which concerned things of the highest moment, religion and the Church, gave a shock to many of the most conscientious and sincere, who had lived long in the world, had been content with things as they were, and could not acquiesce in the reasons for such great and perilous alterations.

A law had been passed by the same parliament which abolished the papal authority, declaring the nullity of the king's marriage with Catharine, and requiring all persons to take an oath to maintain the succession to his children by Ann Boleyn[2]; the refusal of which oath was pronounced misprision of treason.

---

[1] GUICCIARDINI. [2] 25 Hen. VIII. c. 21.

This law, and one which immediately followed, proved fatal to two most excellent and able men,—Fisher, bishop of Rochester, and Sir Thomas More, late Lord Chancellor. There had previously been some indication that the king's marriage was severely censured by those who adhered to the papal supremacy. Towards the end of the preceding year, when it was reported as about to take place, Friar Peto, of the order of Observants, a stricter class of Franciscans, had denounced it in the pulpit in the king's presence at Greenwich. He took for his subject the death of Ahab, and compared Cranmer and the others to the lying prophets, while he himself was the Micaiah who told the king the truth. And when on the next Sunday another preacher took the contrary side, and challenged Peto to answer him, Friar Elstow, of the same house with Peto, standing up in the rood-loft, answered the challenge, boldly accusing the king of adultery, and those who advised him of betraying his soul to perdition. This was the year before, but now when the oath of succession was tendered to all persons under the new act, Fisher and More refused to take it. They were willing indeed to swear to the succession of the issue of the second marriage, but objected to those words of the act which declared the marriage of Catharine void from the beginning, whereas the pope had now declared it valid. Cranmer earnestly advised that their proposal should be accepted,—it would be the way to procure the agreement of all parties; for, as he said, "there was not one within the realm that would reclaim against it[1]." But it was no part of Henry's character to admit any deviation from his will; and they were both committed to the Tower. One part of the accusation against them was, that they had listened to the oracles of one Elizabeth Barton, called, by her admirers, the Maid of Kent, who was executed with other ten persons, monks and priests, for having conspired to spread

[1] Letter cvi.

false prophecies threatening the king with the Divine vengeance, if he should marry Ann Boleyn. This poor woman had a power, which is not very uncommon, of going into a sort of trance, from which she could raise herself when she pleased, and had been persuaded, by some of these accomplices, as she confessed before her execution, to pretend she was inspired, and set up for a prophetess. It surprises us, that such a man as Bishop Fisher should have listened to her visions, as he certainly had done; but this only proves him to have been credulous. There was no pretence to impute to him any participation in the imposture; and perhaps some of the rest (his own chaplain among them) may have been dupes rather than culprits. But as both he and More persisted in refusing the oath in the form prescribed, they were detained in prison.

Here they were soon joined by other sufferers. The oath was exacted from all the king's subjects who had completed their sixteenth year; and especially it was tendered to the members of religious orders. John Houghton, prior of the Carthusians in London, with one of his monks, had scrupled to take the oath of succession; but after a short imprisonment, by the persuasion of Lee, archbishop of York, he submitted, and persuaded his convent to submit, on the ground that it was not a matter that concerned any article of faith. But the next year another oath was required, acknowledging the king as the supreme head of the Church. Understanding this to mean that he was "supreme primate in spirituals," they resolved to maintain the contrary with their lives. The prior, an aged and learned man, called together a chapter of his convent, and shedding tears of compassion for the younger members, who were willing to share the worst with him, he declared he would readily yield his own life to save them, if it might be allowed; but if otherwise, "the will of God be done." They prepared for death, the prior setting the example, and going round to each member of the convent in succession, to ask pardon on

his knees for any offence or unkindness. This was followed by all the rest; after which, having confessed to each other, they celebrated the mass of the Holy Ghost, with prayers and hymns to the blessed Spirit, to obtain the strength and comfort of his grace for their last conflict. Two other priors, of the same order, concurring in the refusal, were soon after condemned and executed, together with Houghton and another monk, and a month later three more of the same house, Middlemore, Exmew, and Newdigate, underwent the same fate.

Clement VII. died in the beginning of this year, A.D. 1535, and was succeeded by Paul III., one of whose first acts, and a most imprudent one, was to make Bishop Fisher a cardinal. It was intended doubtless to express his approbation of the course this prelate was pursuing respecting the supremacy, and was so understood by the king. Soon after both Fisher and More were tried for treason, and convicted on evidence which would now be considered wholly insufficient. The bishop had been led into conversation on the point of the king's supremacy by persons who betrayed him, and his opinions thus obtained were produced against him. He was beheaded June 22, 1535, in the 77th year of his age, venerable alike for his virtues and his years, and lamented even by those who did not concur in his opinions. On the 6th of July, the great and good Sir Thomas More followed his fate; and as far as Henry's character is connected with the English Reformation, such acts are a stain upon that event which it is better to acknowledge and deplore than to palliate or disclaim. On the news of Fisher's death, the pope proceeded to those violent courses which had been too long the custom with his court. He passed a sentence by which the king was cited to answer for his conduct, and in case of refusal, was pronounced excommunicate, his kingdom placed under an interdict, his subjects absolved from their allegiance, his dominions offered to the first invader, and all the bishops and clergy commanded to quit the country. This sentence, however, though

pronounced at that time, was so far suspended for the present that the publication of it was deferred, and did not take place till after the suppression of the monasteries.

Immediately after, there appeared a publication from Reginald Pole, the king's near relative, and equally descended with himself from the house of York, which was calculated not only to exasperate but to alarm him. Pole was a man of high character and amiable mind, and had been educated by Henry, and treated with marked distinction. He was now dean of Exeter, but was chiefly resident in Italy; and there he was earnestly labouring for some salutary reforms in the court and Church of Rome, when he heard of the destruction of his friend More. Perhaps his royal blood, as well as the associations of his foreign education, might render him the less subservient to the will of his imperious sovereign. His book was entitled a *Defence of the Unity of the Church*[1], and was addressed to the Emperor Charles V., Henry's avowed enemy, calling upon him to invade England, and fight against the enemy of Christendom. Charles was preparing an armament against the Turks, when this English nobleman wrote to him, that though he were now in the Turkish seas, ready to join battle with those adversaries of the Christian name, he would exhort him to turn his arms against worse heretics than Turks. He reminded him, that the English people had before now deposed their kings for misgovernment or wanton profuseness, and assured him that they had the same spirit still, and were only now withheld from calling their sovereign to account, by the persuasion and the hope that the emperor must and would assist them.

There was one of Pole's assertions which seems to

[1] That this book was written after the death of More, in A.D. 1535, is evident from the reference to that event; and that it was immediately after is equally certain, from its referring to Catharine as being still alive; for she died on the 8th of January, 1536.

have been confidently made, but which was evidently incorrect. He affirmed that the king had gone against his subjects' wishes in renouncing the supremacy of the pope. If he had said that the generality of the people were not then prepared to concur in such changes in doctrine as were soon afterwards introduced, that might have been true. It is not to be expected that men should know or embrace the truth as it is in Christ when they have not been taught it; and for that very reason it is the duty of the Church to teach the truth, and of wise governors to see that it be taught. But that the rejection of the papal supremacy was, on the whole, an acceptable measure with the nation, appears not only from the long struggles against that weary yoke, but from contemporary evidence of an unexceptionable kind. The next year, one of the most upright of the English prelates, Tonstall, now bishop of Durham, who had hesitated about the king's supremacy while he concurred in renouncing that of the pope, wrote to Pole as follows; "It is true the king hath rescued the English Church from the encroachments of the court of Rome, and if this be a singularity he deserves praise. For the king has only reduced matters to their original state, and helped the Church of England to her ancient freedom." And as to the assertion that the people did not wish it, "This," he said, "is a mistake, to that degree, that, on the contrary, if the king should attempt the reviving the pope's power, he would find it a very difficult business to bring his subjects to this sentiment, and get a bill of that nature to pass in parliament." And about the same time Gardiner, in his celebrated work, "*Of True Obedience*," to which Bonner wrote a preface, took exactly the same ground. The opinions held at that time by those two celebrated persons are worthy of remark. Bonner declared that the chief object of Gardiner's book was, to show that the difference between the king and the papal court did not turn upon his marriage, but upon higher grounds, and that what he had done was with

the consent and approbation of the most excellent and learned bishops, and of the nobles and whole people of England. And Gardiner thus wrote—"The question is now in every body's mouth, whether the consent of the universal people of England rests on divine right, by which they declare and regard their illustrious king, Henry VIII., to be the supreme head on earth of the English Church; and, by the free vote of their parliament, have invited him to use his right, and call himself Head of the English Church in name as he is in fact. In which act," he continues, "no new thing was introduced; only they determined that a power which, of divine right, belongs to their prince, should be more clearly asserted, by adopting a more significant expression; and so much the rather in order to remove the cloud from the eyes of the vulgar, with which the falsely pretended power of the bishop of Rome has now for some ages overshadowed them[1]."

Fortified by such opinions, Henry resolved to maintain the position he had assumed. But he was not the sort of man who would be ignorant of the extent of that power with which he had to contend. He knew that several of the emperors, and many other sovereigns, had been dispossessed of their dominions in consequence of the papal interdict; and he now found himself in that condition under which two at least of his own predecessors, Henry II. and John, had been forced to the most abject submissions. There was no reason to doubt the willingness of Charles V. to accept the tempting invitation to invade his country, and Henry resolved to break the power of those who were likely to be his enemies at home, and to avail himself of a part of their wealth in the defence of his dominions, rather than risk the ill-will of his people by asking for subsidies at such a moment. There is cause to believe, from his own account, that such were his original intentions in the suppression of the monas-

[1] Steph. Gardineri *De Verâ Obedientiâ*, Fasc. App. p. 806.

teries. Leaving the larger and wealthier of these establishments, which were generally the best conducted, and removing into them some of the inmates of the smaller houses, he intended to suppress the latter, and to make use of their property, partly in the fortification of his seaports against foreign invasion, and partly in a measure formerly proposed by Wolsey,—the creation of new bishoprics in several places.

By virtue of his royal supremacy, he now appointed Thomas Cromwell to be his vicar-general in ecclesiastical affairs; an office evidently borrowed from that of vicar-apostolic, or legate of the Roman see; and the functions of which showed the king's design to take to himself whatever supremacy the pope had exercised before. For he gave commission to Cromwell or his officers to visit the whole body of the clergy, not excepting the bishops themselves; to correct and reform, and exercise ecclesiastical jurisdiction; to deprive or suspend archbishops and bishops, to convene synods and preside in them. Such a degree of authority is clearly inconsistent with any true liberty in the Church; and the suspension of episcopal jurisdiction was therefore very soon abandoned. But as the parliament had placed the visitation of monasteries under the crown, Cromwell appointed visitors under this commission to inquire into their present state. This visitation occupied the remainder of the year 1535; and in the course of it, some few houses were surrendered to the crown. The report of the visitors was presented to parliament the following year, and contained a long list of accusations, especially against the smaller abbeys, but admitted that some good order was observed among the more considerable houses.

It is not necessary here to repeat those accusations themselves. Enough has been said in treating of the Church before the Reformation, to shew that the monastic system had sadly degenerated, and it can do no good to relate the imputations brought against the poor monks, in individual cases, when their day of doom

was come. The character of the visitors is not in all cases free from exception, and they seem to have acted as if they thought it was their business to report all the ill they could. Take for instance this of Layton's, one of the most severe against the monasteries, who had applied to Cromwell for an extension of his commission to other places, on the ground that it would be for his own interest. He writes, "At Bruton and Glastonbury there is nothing notable. The brethren be so strict kept that they cannot offend; *but fain they would if they might*, as they confess; and so the fault is not in *them*;" where the very strictness of the discipline kept up, is used to found an accusation upon[1]. In several instances, the visitors themselves interceded for particular houses, on the ground of their good order and regularity; as Catesby, Polesworth, and Woolstrop, in Northamptonshire; also the great Abbey of Ramsey in Cambridgeshire. In other instances, as at the nunneries of Chepstow and Godstow, Dr. London, one of the commissioners, was accused of very shameful practices, and the same man was afterwards convicted of perjury, in an attempt to collect evidence against some persons under the act of the six articles[2].

[1] Strype, *Eccl. Memorials*, Henry VIII. cxxxv. This Layton was a worthless court parasite, who had been before employed to entrap the venerable Bishop Fisher.

[2] The course of the proceedings adopted is thus summed up by Mr. Lodge: "The principals of some houses were induced to surrender by threats, others by pensions; and when both these methods failed, the most profligate monks were sought for, and bribed to accuse their governors or their brethren of horrible crimes. Agents were employed to seduce nuns, and then to accuse them, and, by inference, their respective societies, of incontinence. Those who were engaged in this wretched mission, took money of the terrified sufferers, as a price of a forbearance which it was not in their power to grant. Cromwell himself accepted great sums from several monasteries, to save them from that ruin which he alone knew to be inevitably decreed. He executed his mission, however, to Henry's entire satisfaction, and received the most splendid rewards." Lodge's *Portraits, Life of Cromwell.* Perhaps this account is *overcharged.*

And yet it would be idle to doubt that great abuse existed. The visitors may have been interested parties, though there is no ground to question the respectability of the greater part of them: but the evidence of many other disinterested persons is to the same effect. Such is the testimony of one who had seen the state of the monasteries, and whose character is unimpeachable. "Truly the monstrous lives of monks, friars, and nuns, have destroyed their monasteries and churches, and not we[1]." The evidence of Bernard Gilpin, a still more unexceptionable witness, is to the same effect[2]. And further testimony may be found by those who would know more of these things, than we care to produce in this place[3].

It was determined to suppress by law, all those monasteries whose revenues were not sufficient to maintain the numbers required to constitute "a convent," or chapter, and the preamble of the act of parliament, by which this was done, places the justification of that course, on their own corrupt condition. It recites, that "manifest sin, vicious, carnal, and abominable living, is commonly committed in the small abbeys and priories, whereby the governors and servants spoil and waste the churches, farms, and lands; and although continual visitations have been held, by the space of two hundred years and more, for reformation of such unthrifty, carnal, and abominable living, yet none amendment is hitherto had, but their vicious living shamefully increaseth and augmenteth." And then it grants to the king, all such religious houses and their property, as are not above the yearly value of £200, but with a provision that the grantees, or purchasers of them, shall be bound to keep hospitality as formerly. It is remarkable that this act was passed in a parliament, where twenty-six mitred abbots sat as barons, and that the whole number of spiritual lords was at that time

[1] NOWELL'S *Reproof of Dorman.* [2] STRYPE, *Eccl. Mem.* i. 397.
[3] *Ibid.* p. 536.

greater than the whole number of lay peers, who had seats in the upper house. The number of these smaller houses thus dissolved, was three hundred and seventy-six, and their annual revenue amounted to £32,000, besides about £100,000 in plate and money.

It is said that Anne Boleyn interested herself to save some of the monasteries. But the catastrophe of her own fate occurred in the same year in which this act was passed, and before any steps could be taken in consequence of it. The history of her fall must be sought elsewhere. We can do no more than relate that her death took place in May, 1536, and that the king married Jane Seymour, the next day after the execution of her, who had so lately been the chosen object of his affection[1].

Henry proceeded with the suppression of the lesser monasteries, as the act had enabled him; and a commission was appointed to value and dispose of the lands, and receive their revenues, which was called, from its purpose being to increase the royal revenue, the Court of Augmentations. But the attempt had well nigh cost him his crown. It does not appear that many houses were actually suppressed when the rebellion broke out; but the popular feeling, which had been against the monastic orders when they were in the enjoyment of envied wealth, now took part with them in their adversity. Some were already turned adrift with a very small pittance, some were drafted into the larger abbeys, where they would excite compassion, and perhaps not be welcome inmates, while the suspension

[1] The question of the innocence of the unfortunate Anne Boleyn does not enter into the plan of this work. It can, however, scarcely admit of doubt with any candid reader. The slanders against her early life were not heard of till nearly forty years after her death, when they were put forth by Sanders, an English Jesuit, who died in an Irish rebellion. The Spaniards at the time took up the calumnies in their zeal for Catharine of Arragon; but one of their best later writers defends Anne's entire innocence.—Feyjoo, *Cartas Eruditas*, iv. § 5.

of their usual charities would touch the people themselves. It happened also that this law, though it appeared to attack the weakest, included those who were the most likely to engage the public sympathies. These were the inmates of the nunneries, places which had long been an asylum for the unmarried daughters of the gentry, and where, in many cases, persons of gentle lives and kind deeds, had drawn to them the warm attachment of the poor. The people saw their benefactresses turned adrift with the allowance of a small pittance, or sent back to seek a maintenance in an unfriendly world; and the suspension of their usual charities was an evil which they immediately felt. To appease the growing discontent, the king first signified his pleasure to give back some thirty of these houses, the greater half of the number being nunneries. At the same time, perhaps with a view to give a religious colour to the proceeding, and to recall men's minds to one of the chief abuses in these foundations, some injunctions was set forth by authority, condemning the worship of saints and images. But the storm kept gathering. Towards the end of harvest it broke out in Lincolnshire, where Mackrell, abbot of Barlings, disguised as a mechanic, and calling himself Captain Cobbler, headed twenty thousand men. This tumult was soon appeased; but it was followed by a much more formidable rising. By the month of October almost the whole of the northern counties were in arms. In this portion of England there had been very little persecution; and high and low were generally averse to the new changes. Forty thousand men assembled in Yorkshire, under the command of a private gentleman named Aske. They marched with a crucifix before them; their banners and dress were marked with a cross, and they called their expedition *The Pilgrimage of Grace*. They avowed their object to be "the removal of low-born counsellors (alluding to Cromwell, who was a fuller's son at Putney), the suppression of heresy, and the restitution of the Church."

They restored the ejected monks, as they went, to their houses; and having taken Pontefract, where were Lee, archbishop of York, and the Lord Darcy, they obliged both, perhaps not altogether unwillingly, to join them. The king's forces were at Doncaster, not six thousand strong, when they were threatened with an attack from insurgents more than five times their number. But the Duke of Norfolk and the Earl of Shrewsbury, who commanded them, contrived to temporise. Promises were made, and pardon offered, and the rebel troops melted away without a battle. Aske was for a time taken into favour, and probably by his means the king discovered who were at the bottom of the plot. But fresh risings taking place the next year, in which he was implicated, he was beheaded for treason; and Lord Darcy underwent the same fate on Tower-hill; while Lord Hussey, for having been concerned in the Lincolnshire rebellion, was executed at Lincoln.

Nothing so strengthens a government as an unsuccessful resistance. Henry knew this, and resolved to press his advantage. In the year 1537, it was made high treason by act of parliament to deny the royal supremacy; and by means of this law, and the knowledge he had of the participation of some abbots and priors in the Pilgrimage of Grace, he was able to work upon the fears of some, while bribes and promises were held out to others. This year twenty-one houses surrendered, and of these some were of the class of larger abbeys. In the following year, A.D. 1538, one hundred and fifty-nine resignations were obtained,—among them the abbeys of Woburn and Burlington, whose abbots, with three others, had been executed for having joined the rebels. But the impediments he had found caused the king to resort to a fatal expedient in the disposal of the immense domains which he thus obtained. It was suggested that the only way to content the nobility and leading gentry, was to bribe them with grants of the sequestered lands; and this course was adopted with a lavish hand, sometimes by selling them at a rate infi-

nitely below their value, and sometimes by granting them in free gift. It was hoped the new proprietors would thus become, as it were, parties to the suppression, and so would concur in maintaining what was done. The success of this scheme was soon manifest.

In this year Henry seized upon the treasures at Becket's shrine at Canterbury, ordered the bones of the saint to be burnt and scattered to the winds, and his name to be erased from the calendar. In order to justify it, a solemn trial was held, in which the dead archbishop was pronounced a traitor, perhaps in imitation of the process acted a century earlier over Wycliffe[1]. Such vengeance over dead men's dust can only disgrace the man who is guilty of it. But it served to exasperate the papal court, and now it was resolved that the bull of excommunication and deposition should be published, which though passed three years before, had been as yet suspended. Directions were therefore given for its publication, by affixing it to a church in each of the three kingdoms of France, Scotland, and Ireland; and the pope at the same time wrote to the kings of Scotland and France, exhorting them to invade the country, of which he was willing to confer the sovereignty on them. But the king only proceeded with the greater earnestness and severity. The Countess of Salisbury, the mother of Cardinal Pole, a lady of great age, and of royal birth, being the daughter of the Duke of Clarence, had been in prison some time, for having been concerned in an insurrection in the west, for which her eldest son was taken and beheaded. A standard had been found

[1] Professor Jenkyns has shown some reasons for doubting the fact of this trial. (*Cranmer's Works*, i. 262.) There seems to be some error about the date, which might easily happen in a period of public disturbance, when, as Fuller says, people "cannot well hear what the clock of time doth strike." But the account is circumstantial; and it was the practice of Henry, and one great secret of his power, to do nothing without the *forms* of law. The state paper which the Professor quotes, speaks in that place not of Becket, but of St. Swithin.

in her possession bearing the royal arms, and there was some reason to suspect a design of setting up her family as next heirs to the throne, of the house of York. When the Pilgrimage of Grace broke out, Reginald Pole was sent by the pope as his Legate into the Netherlands, to distribute a manifesto in approbation of the rebellion, and to incite the continental sovereigns to assist in it. Henry was resolved to retaliate upon Pole, and he ordered his aged mother to be brought to the scaffold, in bloody retaliation.

The next year, A.D. 1539, he obtained an act of parliament, not, indeed, to suppress the larger monasteries, but to grant and confirm to him all such monasteries as had been or should be surrendered. In order to obtain this law, he had already made very large grants to his nobility and others, which would not be valid without it, and he promised to make up the number of the House of Lords, which would be diminished by the removal of so many abbots, by creating as many new peers. There were twenty abbots still left in the House of Lords when this act was passed, but it sealed their doom. Without it, the lands of any houses suppressed would by law have reverted to the heirs of the founders, and as the king only represented the royal foundations, he would have had no title to the rest. Cranmer attempted on this distinction, to found a claim for preserving some of them. He proposed that all such houses as were not of royal foundation should be turned into schools and colleges for education, or hospitals for the sick and poor. And Latimer the year before had written to Cromwell, to intercede for the priory of Great Malvern in his diocese, a house ruled by a worthy old man, who was his friend, and who would gladly have seen his society reformed on a plan which he proposed to combine a system of education with extended charity, adding, "Alas! my good Lord, shall we not see two or three in every shire changed to such a remedy?" If such plans had been adopted, and if the king had devoted the royal foundations in part to the establishment of the

full number of bishoprics which he had originally designed, and the rest to purposes of charity and education, and the maintenance of colleges of clergy to supply the want of ministerial functions in populous places, much good could not have failed to result. But Henry's power was too great for any one man to be trusted with. The parliament which made such laws ought to have been at liberty to provide for the fulfilment of his professions, whereas, being obliged to trust to his promises, they left all to his mercy;—and he had squandered so much beforehand that he had not the means of acting up to his intentions, and as usual in such cases made that his excuse which was his greater blame. This year, however, a law was passed to empower him to erect new bishoprics, under which six were eventually founded, namely, at Westminster, Chester, Gloucester, Peterborough, Osney near Oxford, afterwards removed to Christ Church, and at Bristol. But this was a poor fulfilment of his own design, which appears by a document in his handwriting, to have embraced these nine other places besides: St. Alban's, Waltham, Dunstable, Leicester, Fountains, Bury St. Edmund's, Shrewsbury, Welbeck, and Lanceston.

Every effort was now made to obtain the surrender of the remaining houses. It certainly appears that a considerable number of their inmates concurred in desiring a Reformation. But on the other hand, there can be no doubt that the greater part were unwilling to resign, and some few could not be induced to do so. Of these, the abbots of Glastonbury, Reading, and Colchester paid the forfeit of their refusal with their lives. Richard Whiting, last abbot of Glastonbury, was a very aged man, of unblemished character. He had one hundred monks in his monastery, and three hundred monks or lay brothers in the cells dependent on it. He maintained many young men at college, distributed abundant alms, and exercised princely hospitality. But it was one of those periods in this uncertain life, when the best and noblest spirits are called to suffer for

the sins of those who belong to their class without partaking of their virtue. He was summoned to London in the hope that, away from home, the old man's heart would fail. But when this was found to be in vain, he was sent home again; and passing through Wells on his way, he found the whole county assembled, and himself summoned into court on a charge of burglary and treason. The trial was public, the jury respectable, and the fact appears to have been proved, of his having applied some of the jewels of the abbey to some purpose not explained, but which probably was the support of the northern insurrection the year before. He was found guilty, but no sentence appears to have followed; and he was sent home to Glastonbury. But the next day, as he approached the abbey, a priest came to his litter, and bade him prepare for death. He begged only that he might take leave of his brethren, but this was denied him. He was dragged on a hurdle to the Tor Hill, overlooking the splendid church and buildings of his monastery, and there, with two of his monks, was hanged and quartered.

The fate of this church and its surrounding buildings is one among too many instances of the bad spirit in which these things were done. It was one of the finest churches in England, and superior to most cathedrals. The length of the church itself was four hundred and twenty feet; that of St. Joseph's Chapel beyond it, one hundred and ten feet; in all five hundred and thirty, being the same length as Canterbury Cathedral, and longer by six feet than York or Lincoln Minster[1]. But all the buildings were unroofed by order of the king, including the library, and the whole house was desecrated. Similar proceedings took place elsewhere. The visitors who took the surrender of the abbey of Tewkesbury, for instance, reported that they had left to

[1] See a valuable table of the dimensions of the chief churches in Europe, in the appendix to *Ancient Models*, by Sir Charles Anderson, Bart., second edition, p. 205.

stand the abbot's lodging, pantry, cellar, stable, and barn, while the beautiful church, with its chapels, cloisters, chapter-house, and the rest, are placed in a schedule with this title, "*Deemed to be superfluous;*" and then follows a valuation of the lead and bells. This church was saved by the parishioners, who bought it of the king. The abbey of St. Alban's was granted with its immense possessions to Sir Richard Lea, and its church was also condemned; but the townspeople bought it for £400. In other instances, as at Croyland, a part only of the church has been preserved; while the inhabitants of the place are left to bury their dead in the roofless nave of that once splendid and celebrated structure. Others were less fortunate. Burlington Priory was held to be forfeited for treason, and Bellasis, the visitor employed, wrote that he had taken down all the lead, and deferred pulling down the house till the next summer, to *save the expence of working in short days*[1]. The abbey of Abingdon is another example. Its church was a stately cathedral, standing in a close, with two western towers lately completed, and with cloisters, chapter-house, and a magnificent library. It was the burial-place of the Harcourts and other noble families, and was the Mother Church of the surrounding district. Yet it shared the same fate.

The immediate consequences of these proceedings were lamentable enough. It is not indeed correct to attribute to the dissolution of the monasteries the abject state of the country clergy, or the still more deplorable condition of the poor which existed for some time after. For there is certain evidence that these were of earlier date. A supplication presented to the king before this time[2], complains that "noble and worshipful men, as well of the clergy as of the laity, abuse their presentations to parsonages and vicarages, giving them to surveyors of their lands, receivers of their rents, stewards of their household, falconers and gardeners." A similar

[1] STEPHENS, vol. ii. p. 129.

[2] *Harl. Misc.* x. 459.

complaint was made in another book[1] towards the end of this reign, that surveyors of buildings, goldsmiths, and others are rewarded with benefice upon benefice. And as for the state of the poor, we may judge from the description of Sir Richard Gresham, then lord mayor, a friend of Cranmer's, and father of the famous Sir Thomas Gresham, who set a noble example to the courtiers who were scrambling for the plunder of the abbeys for their own advancement, by applying to the king, not on behalf of himself or his family, but of those whom he justly called "Christ's very images, created to his own similitude." "There be," he said, "near and within London, three hospitals endowed with great possessions only for the relief of the poor and impotent, and not to the maintenance of canons, priests, and monks to live in pleasure, nothing regarding *the miserable people lying in every street*, offending every person passing by the way." He then proceeds to entreat the king to make over these hospitals to the lord mayor and aldermen, for the use of the poor; "and then your grace shall perceive that where now a small number of canons and monks be found for their own profit only, a great number of poor and sickly persons shall be refreshed and maintained, and also healed and cured[2]." By his intercession, St. Bartholomew's and St. Thomas's hospitals were preserved, and the trusteeship consigned, as he requested, to the lord mayor and aldermen for the time being. And his good example was followed by Sir Richard Dobbs and Sir George Barnes, the friends of Ridley, and Sir Thomas White, the founder of St. John's College, Oxford, and of the Merchant Taylors' school.

But though the dissolution of the monasteries did not originate these evils, it certainly augmented them.

---

[1] "The Supplication of the Poor Commons," A.D. 1546. The other book was called "The Supplication of Beggars," and was printed in 1524. STRYPE, *Eccl. Mem.* i. 608.

[2] STRYPE, *Eccl. Mem.* i. 410.

The sort of hospitality exercised by the monasteries was not indeed calculated to elevate the character of those who depended upon it. But its loss was severely felt when the new proprietors ceased to spend their revenue on the spot, and generally looking only to profit, raised the rents, and turned the lands into pasture, by which means the tenants were oppressed, and the labourers deprived of employment. But the cause of religion suffered still more. Many monks were put into small livings to save the expense of paying the pensions granted them on the dissolution of their houses, and thus the country clergy became more embued than before with hostility to the Reformation. Nor was this the worst. Poor as were the stipends of the vicars who depended on the monasteries, the bishop of the diocese had the power, by several statutes, to augment them; and the new lay impropriators received the impropriate tithes on the same condition. But by degrees it was broken through; where the monastery had supplied its own chaplain, the new proprietor hired a curate on the lowest possible terms, and where a vicar was endowed, in no single instance was his endowment augmented. Nor was this a transitory evil; it has been felt ever since, especially in large towns, the churches of which, from their position, were usually in the hands of the monasteries, and where the stipend of the vicar is, in general, wholly inadequate to provide for the parochial duty.

But few of Henry's Court were found to follow the example of Sir Richard Gresham. In general it was a struggle who should get the most, and very dishonest means were adopted in obtaining it. A paper presented afterwards to Queen Elizabeth concerning these grants in her father's time, declares that the value of gold and silver from the shrines, plate, bells, and furniture was not less than a million in gold, yet of this only a very small proportion came to the king, the rest being pilfered. And the same document relates the various cheats practised upon the king, by withholding

the title deeds, making false returns of value, that those who made them might buy the cheaper; omitting to make return of woodlands, and then when they had cut down all the wood, exchanging with the king for other lands where the wood was standing[1]. It is no wonder that these things should bring no real wealth either to the king or his courtiers. The whole number of religious houses suppressed amounted to six hundred and sixty, and their revenues, as returned, to £140,785 per annum, which at the present value might be a yearly revenue of two millions. But what with large pensions paid to the abbots and monks, and profuse grants and cheap sales to all sorts of persons, little was left for the endowment of the few bishoprics that were founded, except impropriate tithes, and after fortifying some few places on the coast, the king found his exchequer so low that the very next year he was forced to come to parliament for a subsidy, and twice again afterwards before his death; though he had professed, and perhaps intended, to maintain his state and provide for the defence of his kingdom out of those revenues alone.

Nor did this sudden wealth prosper any better in the hands of his subjects. Some few families[2], indeed, have preserved even to the present time the lands they thus acquired; and let us hope that the way they have preserved them, has been by not forgetting the conditions of charity and hospitality on which they first were granted. But it was observed that in far the larger number of cases, one or two generations sufficed to dissipate the whole. It is not for us to anticipate God's judgment, and pronounce upon such results: sudden

---

[1] Information of Abuses, &c. WEEVER, *Fun. Mon.* p. 124. *Harl. Misc.* x. 279.

[2] Burnet thus enumerates the great families raised under Henry VIII. and still flourishing in his time. Seymour, Paulet, Russell, Wriothesley, Herbert, Rich, Cromwell, Brown, Petre, Paget, North, Montague. Appendix against Saunders, vol. i. p. 279. But some of these were previously important families.

wealth is proverbially inconstant, especially if it come in an indirect way. But such things are certainly a subject of grave and serious reflection; and there is one part of these grants, the impropriate tithes, on which it may not be wrong to express a stronger opinion. If the monasteries themselves received them on condition of making an adequate provision for the service of the churches to which they belonged, and if they were granted to laymen on the same condition, no human law can release any future purchasers from the moral obligation of making the like provision. If they bought them ignorantly or thoughtlessly, the duty is the same when they become aware of it. More than this,—we had no right, as a nation, to seize these tithes at all. Whatever may be thought about the lands of the monasteries, the tithes did not belong to them, but to the service of God, and to that service they ought to have been restored. And when we shall have grace and faith as a nation, to act upon the exhortation of the word of God, "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of Hosts, if I will not open unto you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it;" then may we hope that the promise will be fulfilled, "All nations shall call you blessed: for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the Lord of Hosts[1]."

It would be unjust to the memory of Cranmer and his friends, to suppose that they shared in the appetite for

---

[1] Malachi iii. 10, 12. There were two acts of parliament, 12 Rich. II. cap. 6, and 4 Hen. IV. cap. 12, by which the bishop is empowered to see that the vicar of each impropriate rectory be well and sufficiently endowed. As these laws have not been repealed, it has been thought that the bishops might still exercise the power of augmenting vicarages. But this seems to be a mistake: for the words of each of these laws seem to be confined to the power which the bishop might exercise *at the time of the endowment*.

destruction, or in the unworthy motives of the agents by whom it was effected. Nothing is more remarkable than the decline in the influence of the reformers at court from the time of the downfall of the abbeys. And this is attributed, by more than one writer of the time, to the opposition made by their party to the spoliation that was going on[1]. Latimer gave great offence by saying in one of his sermons, "that it was not decent the abbeys, which were ordained for the comfort of the poor, should be used for keeping the king's horses." He was told that such preaching was seditious, and against the king's honour; and he was obliged, on this or another occasion, to plead his own cause to Henry on his knees: "If your grace allow me for a preacher," said this sincere man, "I would desire to be suffered to discharge my conscience." He escaped for the present; but the storm was gathering and deeper politicians were at work to remove so honest a monitor from the king's court and chapel.

There was all this while a numerous party of temporising opponents of the reformed doctrine, who had yet joined in asserting the king's supremacy, and prosecuting those who denied it, and had many of them been concerned in the commission against the monasteries, and had obtained large grants of abbey-lands. Among these were the Duke of Norfolk, and Sir William Petre; and, of the church-men, Bonner, and Gardiner, of whom Cranmer said, that "he lacked neither learning in the law, nor witty invention, nor craft, to set forth his matters to the best." When these men joined with the courtiers, whose religion consisted chiefly in kindness to themselves, they were often too strong for Cranmer and the friends of reformation; and they appear to have urged on the extreme measures with no other view that can be supposed, but to gratify the

[1] Treatise on unwritten Verities. JENKYNS'S *Cranmer*, vol. iv. p. 168. FOXE, p. 1616.

king's humour, and to gain power or advantage to themselves[1].

The colleges and chantries yet remained, and the houses of the knights of St. John. These high-born and wealthy knights would not surrender, and so they were dissolved by act of parliament the following year, A.D. 1540. Their illustrious grand master, De l'Isle Adam, had paid a visit to England a little before this time, on his expulsion from Rhodes after its memorable siege, to intercede for his order with the king, who is said to have granted some slight favours to the hoary and venerable suppliant. It may have been owing to his intercession, that their church in London was spared for the present; it had a bell-tower lately finished, which is described by an eye-witness as one of the finest he had ever seen. And it perhaps was on the same account that such large pensions were granted to the grand prior of England, Sir William Weston, and to the grand prior of Ireland, whose house was at Kilmainham, near Dublin,—£1000 a year to the former, and £500 to the latter. But Weston died of grief the day his house was dissolved.

On the whole, the country has, doubtless, been a gainer by the dissolution of the monasteries. So much land in the hands of such corporations was calculated, as we have seen, to cripple the energies and suppress the enterprise of the people. Nor did it seem likely that these societies could be so reformed as to efface the memory of the superstitions they had cherished, and to promote the interests of true religion. This was certainly Cranmer's opinion, as it may be read in the *Homily of Good Works*, which was composed by him. We may be humbled when we think how many bad passions were at work in their suppression; and regret the injustice that was done to many erring but conscientious men, whose worst crime was a stubborn adherence to

[1] TANNER, *Notitia Monastica*, Pref. p. xxv. COLLIER, *Eccl. History*, ii. 117.

the principles under which they had been brought up. But let us not be ungrateful for all the good which Providence has raised out of the dust of these ruined piles.

From those deserted domes new glories rise,
More useful institutes, adorning man;
Manners enlarged, and new civilities,
On fresh foundations build the social plan.

Science, on ampler plume, a bolder flight
Essays, escap'd from superstition's shrine;
While freed religion, like primeval light
Bursting from chaos, spreads her warmth divine.

Yet here may Pity meditate alone,
Nor scorn, within the deep fane's inmost cell,
To pluck the gray moss from the mantled stone,
Some holy founder's mouldering name to spell;

And when, amid the wavering ivy-wreaths,
Or clustered column hung with matted briar,
The whispering wind its pensive music breathes,
Recall the measured hymn and chanting quire.

CHAPTER XVII.

CONDUCT AND CHARACTER OF CRANMER. LAST YEARS OF HENRY VIII. THE SIX ARTICLES. FALL OF CROMWELL. QUEEN CATHARINE PARR AND ANNE AYSCOUGH. PROGRESS OF REFORMATION. COUNCIL OF TRENT.

> Ye blessed angels, if of you
> There be, who love the ways to view
> Of kings and kingdoms here;
> (And sure 'tis worth an angel's gaze,
> To see throughout that dreary maze,
> God teaching love and fear,)
> O say, in all the bleak expanse,
> Is there a spot to win your glance
> So bright, so dark as this?
>
> *Christian Year.* 5 *Lent.*

HAD Cranmer aimed to gain himself a name, instead of pursuing his great object of recovering forgotten truth, he would not have been able to adapt his measures so circumspectly to the uneven current of the time. The praise of firmness and decision is easily given to more daring men, who brave the torrent's force, and stake their life and reputation on a point; the world is not so just to that more rare but not less resolute fortitude, which waits for the floods to subside, and can endure to suffer and be silent, till calmer times give room for more salutary counsels. Cranmer justly judged that both the corruptions which had overspread the Church, and the disjointed condition of society, were mainly owing to the establishment of the pope's laws and power; and that truth and good government could not be restored till the king's authority was acknowledged over all persons and in all causes, and the people had shaken from their

neck "the yoke and halters which they had made for themselves[1]." Judging also that *a king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, to turn it whithersoever He will*, it was a part of his religion, as it has been of all the most excellent teachers, both of the primitive and of our reformed Church, to be *subject to the higher powers for conscience-sake;* not to resist evil,' which was done with the forms and authority of law, but to try to mitigate it; to plead for the sufferers who were unworthily condemned, and to gain over by persuasion those who, from a mistaken principle, held sincerely those errors which he strove to have overthrown. And no patient chemist ever replaced his broken retorts, or watched his experiments in the laboratory, with more earnest pains, than the meek archbishop submitted his course of proceedings to the furnace of the king's wrath, which was so often seen to go forth *as the roaring of a lion, and as messengers of death.*

And an impartial judgment will confess, that there were qualities in the king whom he served, which might well persuade a Christian bishop, at least before the systematic cruelty of Henry's later years, that he was an instrument of Providence, raised up for some great purposes. He had certainly that great princely talent of discerning merit, and selecting for his ministers men who were equal to the burden of those difficult times. These were again removed, when their services were no longer needed—not, as in former reigns, with harm and loss to the public safety, but to their own absolute ruin and eclipse, showing that all their greatness had stood in the sunshine of their sovereign's favour. Hence a people, habitually turbulent and nominally free, bowed down before his will: and it is nothing strange if he learned to believe and turn to account the flatteries with which he was beset. His parliament told him to his face, that he was the most

[1] CRANMER'S *Answer to the Devonshire Rebels.*

learned and most illustrious of kings; and he thought it modesty to answer, that he gave the glory to God. It was not difficult for such a man to persuade himself that the least resistance to his will was the blackest treason. The remorseless system of the civil war, during the preceding century, had made it a principle of self-preservation with the prevailing party to show no mercy; and while none dared remonstrate, and all were familiar with scenes of blood, his own heart unhappily suggested no compunction. And yet, amidst his tyranny, there was the same vigorous intellect conspicuous to the last, and the same resolute pursuit of a grand design. He had conceived the idea of a national Church, holding Catholic truth, independent of the Roman pontiff, and of a patriot king presiding over such a Church. But understanding, as he did, by Catholic truth, every doctrine then held in the Church of Rome, he had no mind or feeling to relax the established way of maintaining it undisputed. He therefore persecuted either party in turn, as each seemed to be opposed to these his favourite notions.

In May, 1539, the same parliament which confirmed the surrender of the larger abbeys, decreed that proclamations, issued by the king on his own authority, should have the force of law; and passed an act to establish, under the severest penalties, *six articles of faith*, on the following points:

1. That in the sacrament of the altar, after consecration, there remaineth no substance of bread and wine; but the natural body and blood of Christ are present under these forms.

2. That communion in both kinds is not necessary to salvation to all persons by the law of God. (This was to establish a custom, which had now prevailed for more than a hundred years, of denying the cup to lay people.)

3. That priests might not marry.

4. That vows of chastity, taken either by men or women, ought to be observed. (So that monks and

nuns, though they had lost their monasteries, were to live as if they were still enclosed, except they had taken the vows before they were of age.)

5. That solitary masses were agreeable to God's law, and ought to be continued; for men received great benefit by them.

6. That auricular confession was necessary, and ought to be retained in the Church.

It was enacted that all who should deny the first article should be burnt as heretics; to impugn the rest was made felony without benefit of clergy. This law was introduced by the Duke of Norfolk, having been previously submitted to the clergy in convocation, where it was opposed by Cranmer and other bishops; but the inferior clergy had assented. When it was before parliament, Cranmer again argued against it for three days successively in the House of Lords; and, though the king came in person to require him to withdraw before it came to the vote, he refused to do so, and recorded his vote against it. The immediate consequence was, that Latimer, now bishop of Worcester, and Shaxton, of Salisbury, were thrown into prison, and resigned their bishopries; and in a short time more than five hundred persons were imprisoned. Many of the clergy who were now married, were forced to separate from their wives; of whom Cranmer himself was one. But the more dismal results of this disgraceful statute did not appear till after the fall of Cromwell.

In the next year after the convocation had passed their vote for an English translation of the Bible, the hopes of the nation had been gratified by the birth of a Prince of Wales, who was baptized by the name of Edward, and had Cranmer for his godfather. The death of his mother, Jane Seymour, ten days after the prince's birth, had left the king again a widower; but the loss was sensibly felt by him in this instance, and he did not immediately seek to supply it, till Cromwell, towards the close of the year 1539, promoted his mar-

riage with a German princess, Anne of Cleves. The event of this marriage is well known; the king conceived a dislike to her as soon as he saw her; he married her as a point of honour, with the intention to divorce her: the divorce was obtained, from the compliant opinions of the clergy, without difficulty; but the minister who had brought him into this predicament was not to be forgiven. The Duke of Norfolk and Gardiner hated Cromwell as an upstart, and as one whose policy had been opposed to theirs, and favourable to the reformers. And there is reason to believe that the king, finding his late measures unpopular, was willing to shift the blame upon his agent, who now appeared to be no longer serviceable. It was natural that Cranmer, who had been in long correspondence with him on matters of Church policy, should have interposed in his favour. But the disgrace of this minister, as of others in these dangerous days, was but a prelude to his death. He was condemned by a bill of attainder, the first victim of a law which he had himself procured, by which an accused person might be condemned without a trial; and in spite of his own abject supplications, and the intercession of Cranmer, suffered as a traitor, July 28, 1540.

It is a singular mark of the nature of the struggle of opinions which was going on, that the very ballad-singers in the streets were divided into opposite parties on this occasion, and rival ditties carried on the controversy, whether Cromwell was more of a traitor or a victim to the cause of reformation. Cromwell seems to have contrived his dying speech in answer to one of these ballads, which accused him of irreligion, when he desired the by-standers "to bear him record, that he died in the Catholic faith, not doubting in any article, nor denying any sacrament of the Church[1]."

[1] "Both sacramentes and sacramentalles
Thou woldyst not suffer within thy walles," &c.
PERCY'S *Reliques*, vol. ii. 66.

By these words, as Collier justly remarks, it is plain that he died in the religion professed by the king at this period, and in the communion of the Church which had sanctioned the Six Articles. But it is to be feared he had been all his life an irreligious politician, and had little serious thought upon these subjects. He was a man of little learning, but great natural talents; he was a faithful friend, but had no other public principle than to execute his master's purposes with profit to himself. Hence he had nothing to restrain him from becoming the resolute agent of the most sweeping measures of destruction[1].

His death, however, was followed by the execution of many better men. A few days afterwards, one of those dreadful spectacles was exhibited in Smithfield, by which Henry thought to prove his impartiality in the system he had resolved to uphold. Barnes, a divine of some note, who had once been employed on the king's service abroad, and two other clergymen, Garrat and Jerome, were burnt for heresy; and Featherstone, Abel, and Powell were tied to the same stake, for adhering to the pope and denying the royal supremacy. When the sword of persecution was thus provided with two edges, it is not wonderful if, as Lord Clarendon asserts, Henry caused more men to be put to death for their religion, than afterwards suffered in the reign of his daughter Queen Mary[2].

---

[1] Foxe tells a story of his meeting with a friar in St. Paul's churchyard, wearing his frock and cowl after the suppression of his house. Cromwell threatened him with hanging at a few hours' notice, if he did not change his apparel. This was much akin to the kind of law which he directed the Wardens of the Marches to deal to the poor gipsies, who were all to leave the realm by a certain day, or to be hanged without judge or jury. See Sir H. Ellis's *Letters*, No. 137.

[2] Lord Clarendon's *Essays*, p. 265. This is more probable than Bishop Burnet's statement, which affirms the contrary. But Burnet perhaps means only to reckon the sufferers on one side. Cranmer himself says *(Answer to Devonshire Rebels)* that "the

It is not necessary, and it would be only painful, to enumerate these cases one after another. Henry himself sometimes took part in the public examinations of the accused, as he did at the trial of Lambert, a clergyman of Cambridge, who, in 1538, was condemned for denying transubstantiation, and burnt with circumstances of peculiar cruelty. And now a remarkable agent in such atrocities, the notorious Edmund Bonner, had been appointed Bishop of Hereford, in the room of Cranmer's friend, Edward Fox, and within two years was translated to the more important see of London. It is said that he had disguised his principles so much before he was elevated, that Cromwell was deceived by him, and recommended him to the king. The possession of power discovered his true nature; and after Cromwell's fall there was no longer any occasion to dissemble. Soon after the execution of Barnes and his fellow-sufferers, he caused a boy of fifteen, Richard Mekin, to be tried for heresy. The act of the Six Articles, cruel as it was, was so far better than the statute of Henry IV., that it required the evidence to be submitted to a jury; and in this instance the grand jury refused to find a bill. But Bonner acted as Cromwell had done at the trial of the Carthusians; he told the jury they were perjured, threatened them with personal danger, and made them put the boy on his trial. He was found guilty; and though he recanted at the stake, he was burnt;—an ominous prelude of the horrors in which this prelate was to steep his soul.

The king had married Catherine Howard, a niece of the Duke of Norfolk, shortly after his divorce from Anne of Cleves; but it was not long that she enjoyed his favour. She was confessedly a woman of unchaste

---

statute of Six Articles continued in force little above the space of one year." But he seems to mean that Henry moderated the execution of it in some cases, which perhaps he knew of, but they are not recorded.

life; and she was condemned and executed for treason with the accomplices of her guilt. Had such a calamity befallen another king, he would have obtained some share of public sympathy; but Henry's domestic misfortunes were regarded as a divine retribution.

His marriage with Catharine Parr, his sixth and last wife, which took place in July, 1543, was calculated to give some advantage to the cause of the reformation. This lady, who had been before twice married, had profited by the practice, which arose with the revival of letters, of instructing females in the higher departments of learning. A good man who lived at that time, speaks of it in writing to Catharine herself, that it was now "no strange thing to hear gentlewomen, instead of most vain communication about the moon shining in the water, to use grave and substantial talk in Latin and Greek, with their husbands, of godly matters; and for young damsels in noble houses and in the courts of princes, instead of cards and other instruments of vain trifling, to have continually in their hands either psalms, homilies, and other devout meditations, or else St. Paul's epistles, or other book of holy Scripture; and as familiarly to read or reason thereof, in Greek, Latin, French, or Italian, as in English." It was a part of the wisdom of Henry VIII., that he himself set an example to his nobility, in giving a learned education to his daughters as well as to his son; and nothing helped more than such social improvement to spread the knowledge of religion. As to Queen Catharine Parr, she was of eminent service in this way; she was herself the author of a religious treatise[1], and it was by her desire and at her expense that the commentary of Erasmus on the New Testament was translated into English; and she persuaded the king to have it set up in churches together with the Bible.

Thus were the two parties balanced; the translated Bible giving an increased advantage to the reformers,

[1] *The Lamentation of a Sinner*, printed in 1548.

while the persecuting statutes presented a strong barrier of defence to some of the most corrupt doctrines and practices of the papal times. The king in these last years of his reign seems in turn to have favoured both; but with evident fear and distrust of the spirit of liberty, which the change of his own making had raised up. He would not retract his permission that the Bible should be read; but he sanctioned a law of Gardiner's to limit the rank and condition of those who should be allowed to read it; so that none of the lower classes of society, no artificers, apprentices, husbandmen, or labourers, might possess copies for themselves. Gardiner had attempted a further restriction, by proposing that in the next edition several words of great doctrinal importance should be given only in Latin. But the king saw the absurdity, and probably alluded to it when he complained in one of his last speeches that "some of the prelates were as stiff in retaining their old *mumpsimus*, as others were over-forward in asserting their new *sumpsimus*." There was some ground for both these complaints. People used to collect round the place at which the Bible was set up in churches; and one would read aloud and expound what he read, even during divine service. An injunction was therefore issued, that none should read Scripture aloud in any assembly, or expound it, without license from the king or the bishop of the diocese.

The old abuse of acting plays and interludes in churches, which the monks and friars had so long sanctioned, was now turned against themselves. Plays were brought in to ridicule the exploded religious orders; but, as the progress is easy from things indifferent to things sacred, and there was little reverence in the inventors of such drolleries, they did not refrain from turning into burlesque the highest mysteries of religion. This evil was very properly restrained by some injunctions which Bonner issued in 1542, probably acting under direction of the king.

In these abuses there was, doubtless, something to

justify those who looked upon the progress of things with suspicion; but much more to convince a deliberate judgment of the necessity of persevering and labouring more earnestly for the advancement of religious knowledge. Henry had discernment enough to appreciate the integrity of Cranmer, and this alone was a powerful motive to keep him from yielding too far to the designs of his enemies. And though he retained doctrines and practices, which could not stand the test of Scripture, he still saw that his own cause had need of the support of the awakened thirst for knowledge. Yet his selfish nature led him to act as if he were pleased to be the spectator of a tragedy, in which his subjects played for life or death, interfering only when the danger threatened his personal inconvenience. There is a gleam of greater generosity in his treatment of Cranmer on one occasion; it was near the close of his reign, in 1546. He revealed to him the machinations of his enemies, and bade him investigate the authors of a plot against his life. Thornden, his suffragan bishop of Dover, formerly a monk of Christ Church, Canterbury, and Dr. Barber, a civilian, whom he retained in his own family as his legal adviser, had been corrupted by Gardiner, and employed in collecting evidence against their patron and benefactor; and several other members of his cathedral, to which Gardiner himself had once belonged, were engaged in the conspiracy. It is a remarkable proof of the confiding simplicity of the archbishop, that he had always entertained the highest opinion of Thornden's character, as "a right honest man, of good learning, good judgment, without superstition, and ready to set forward his prince's cause," and on these grounds had petitioned Cromwell for his preferment[1]. When he was informed of their treachery and ingratitude, he led aside Thornden and Barber into his garden,

[1] Letter ccxiii. JENKYNS's *Cranmer*. Thornden lived to be an active agent in the persecution of the reformed clergy under Queen Mary.

told them that some whom he had trusted had disclosed his secrets, and accused him of heresy, and asked how they thought such persons ought to be treated. They were loud in expressing their indignation, and declared that such traitors deserved to die. "Know ye these letters, my masters?" said the primate, and shewed them the proof of their own falsehood. The two offenders fell upon their knees to implore forgiveness; for it was evident that their lives were in his power; but all the revenge he took was to bid them ask forgiveness of God. His charity and forbearance on this and other similar occasions must be acknowledged as very remarkable, when we remember amidst what personal dangers they were manifested; and it is not wonderful if it became a kind of proverb among those who knew him,—"Do my lord of Canterbury an ill turn, and he is your friend for ever."

The protection, however, which Henry afforded to Cranmer was not extended to inferior men; and it allowed but little relaxation to those who were suspected. Latimer lay for some years a prisoner in the Tower, till, near the end of the reign, he seems to have been dismissed, for we find him preaching again where he could in Warwickshire and Derbyshire. Shaxton was prosecuted under the statute for some words spoken in prison against transubstantiation. He was condemned to be burnt, but was permitted to save his life by signing a recantation; and then forced to do what to a feeling mind must have been worse than death—to preach the condemned sermon, as it may be called, at the dying scene of another, one of the most innocent and gentle sufferers for the doctrine which he had not courage to maintain.

Anne Ayscough, or Askew, was the second daughter of Sir William Ayscough, of Kelsey in Lincolnshire. She had been reluctantly persuaded by her father to marry a gentleman of the same county, of the name of Kyme, on the death of her elder sister, who had been engaged to him. She had borne him two children; but

having embraced the reformed doctrine, she was driven from his house by unkindness, his prejudices being strong against it. She was questioned by some of the clergy at Lincoln, who found her in the Minster, reading the Bible on her knees, according to the good custom which then prevailed, of admitting private devotions in Church. She soon afterwards came to London, and there resumed her maiden name, intending to sue for a divorce; and was taken into the household of Catharine Parr, where she was admired for her beauty, esteemed for her learning and piety, and pitied for her misfortunes. Gardiner and his party were at this time labouring to effect the queen's ruin; and it appears from the examination of Ann Askew that one of their objects with her was to extract evidence against Catharine. She was first taken before what was called "the Quest," that is, persons appointed to hold inquisition for heresy, under the act of the Six Articles, and then, being sent to the lord mayor, was by him committed to prison. But her friends were influential, and made interest to have her bailed; to which the lord mayor, and afterwards the lord chancellor, assented, if they could have the consent of the Bishop of London. Upon this she was brought before Bonner, and each of these persons seems to have shrunk from extreme courses, and to have been willing to release her if they could but obtain from her some sort of acquiescence in their creed. The main point was transubstantiation; at this time she fully admitted the real presence in the holy eucharist, but that, unhappily, was not enough. People were required to acknowledge that Christ's own body is so present in every morsel of consecrated bread, and so remains, as that it cannot cease to be his corporeal body, whatever may become of it; and it was customary to invent imaginary cases by way of testing this belief. Accordingly she was asked, if a mouse should eat the consecrated wafer, whether he received God or no. Any thing more irreverent, or more calculated to drive people away from the truth into opposite

extremes, it is hardly possible to conceive. But that such questions were commonly asked is so absolutely certain, that there is no reason to doubt the artless narrative as related by herself. She smiled at this question, and made no answer; but her woman's delicacy was offended at what she called the "unsavory similitude" by which Bonner tried to persuade her to speak her mind to him, "because if a man had a wound, no wise surgeon would minister help to it before he had seen it uncovered." She was accused to Bonner of having called the mass idolatry. But she replied, "No; I said not so. Howbeit the Quest did ask me, whether private masses relieved souls departed or no? Unto whom then I answered, What idolatry is this, that we should rather believe in private masses, than in the healthsome death of the dear Son of God!" So that, in common with the most learned of the reformers, she drew a distinction between private masses and the service of the Church in the administration of the holy Communion, then called the mass. For she expressed her readiness to communicate at the approaching Easter, and her joy that the time was near. As she admitted the real presence, Bonner resolved to release her if possible, being urged, as he said, by her influential friends, and let us hope also by some faint compassion in himself. So he drew up a confession in which the point of transubstantiation was not very prominently stated, and invited her to sign it. She desired him to add, that she admitted so much as the holy Scripture doth agree unto; but at last she put her name with this explanation only, "I do believe all manner of things contained in the faith of the Catholic Church." The confession, however, was enrolled without the explanation, and was published afterwards as a recantation, which she earnestly protested it was never in her mind to make.

This was in 1545; but the next year, when the council were carrying on their plots against the queen, she was examined before them by the king's command; and Gardiner especially pressed her to acknowledge the

corporeal presence. But she had made up her mind, and now would not say more than, that "so oft as we do receive the bread, in a Christian congregation, in remembrance of Christ's death, and with thanksgiving, we receive therewith the fruits also of his most glorious passion." She was committed to custody, and being seized with violent illness, desired to see Latimer, who, it seems, was then a prisoner. But this was refused, and ill as she was, she was removed to Newgate, where, continuing her journal, she wrote that she neither wished for death nor feared his might, but was as merry as one bound towards heaven; adding this text, "Labour not for the meat that perisheth, but for that which endureth unto life everlasting." Now again she was taken before Bonner, and the wretched Shaxton also was brought to try to persuade her by his example; but when all was vain, and her spirit was goaded into answers still more strong against what they would have had her say, she was sent to the Tower, to endure a more horrible trial. She was questioned about the faith of the ladies of the queen's court, and was especially asked who maintained her in prison, in the hope of eliciting something which might be produced as evidence against the queen herself. What follows must be told in her own words: "Then they put me on the rack, because I confessed no ladies or gentlewomen to be of my opinion, and thereon they kept me a long time. And because I lay still, and did not cry, my lord chancellor and another[1] took pains to rack me with their own hands till I was nigh dead."

"The might of woman appeareth in weakness." These words of the martyr Philpot were exemplified in all the conduct of this Christian lady. She swooned when taken from the rack; and when recovered, she sat for two hours on the bare floor, while Wriothesley, having failed to coerce her, now tried as vainly to per-

[1] The lord chancellor and another; Wriothesley was chancellor. She gives the name of the other, but as Foxe names a different person, it is better to mention neither.

suade her by words of kindness. At length she was brought to the stake, in company with Lascelles, a gentleman of the king's household, and two others. The scene was in Smithfield, near St. Bartholomew's church, under which the lord chancellor and others of the council were provided with seats. Unable to stand, she was brought in a chair and chained up to the stake, while Shaxton preached; after which the chancellor sent to each of them to offer them their lives if they would recant. But her answer was that she came not there to deny her Lord and Master. And the rest having in like manner refused, the lord mayor commanded the fire to be kindled. It was nearly dark, and the spectators, intent upon this appalling scene, rendered more awful by the surrounding gloom, perceived at the moment a few big drops of rain and a single clap of thunder. At a time of strong excitement men's minds are peculiarly apt to entertain thoughts of communion with the unseen world. It was much noted at the time, and one who was present declared in relating it, "there fell a few pleasant drops upon us that stood by, and a pleasing noise from heaven. God knows whether I may truly call it thunder, as the people did in the gospel, but methought it seemed that the angels in heaven rejoiced to receive their souls into bliss." But this tragedy was long remembered, and being the last of these horrors in Henry's reign, people were the more prepared to acquiesce in the changes that afterwards took place.

The queen had well nigh been sacrificed, and Gardiner and his party supposed they had carried their point; but having had notice of the plot, she contrived to allay the king's suspicion, and the result was, that he removed Gardiner's name from among the counsellors appointed to act during the minority of his son. Cranmer also escaped a still more imminent danger; and Henry's anger turned against the opposite party. The Earl of Surrey, a man of high accomplishments and noble character, was brought to the scaffold; though the only ground of accusation was his having expressed indignation at

being superseded in his military command in France, and having quartered the arms of Edward the Confessor without a difference, like one of the royal family. The truth was, probably, that Henry dreaded the power of the house of Norfolk during the minority of his son, and so for reasons of policy he resolved to remove them. The Duke of Norfolk himself was attainted, Cranmer absenting himself from the house, that he might take no part against a political opponent. He was condemned, and would have suffered, like his noble son, on the very next day, when the king was summoned to his last account. He had been ill some time, but none dared to speak to him of his danger; for he had made it treason to speak of the king's death. When one ventured at last to ask whether he would have spiritual consolation, he put it off till it was too late, and then sent for Cranmer. He was speechless when the archbishop came, but he pressed his hand, and expired. In imitation perhaps of former kings, he founded on his deathbed Trinity College in Cambridge, and designed the foundation of Christ's Hospital. And in accordance with the faith in which he died, the heralds proclaimed at his funeral, "Pray for the soul of the high and mighty Prince, Henry VIII. of England." He died on the 27th of January, 1547, in the 56th year of his age, and the 38th of his reign.

The great event of this reign, as regards the Reformation, was the setting forth of an English Bible. This was the right foundation to lay for further measures. Not that the people in this country had been always denied the Scriptures in their own language; we have seen that it was otherwise: the prohibition came in with the era of persecution. There were old English translations, as there were old translations in Spain, till persecution put them down. And a king of France had ordered a French translation to be made at the very period that Wycliffe's Bible was condemned in England. But the Church for a century or more had betrayed this important trust; and the recovery cannot well be too

highly estimated. It is remarkable, that the Bible now published was the same translation which had so lately been condemned by the bishops, as "corrupted by William Tyndal." Tyndal had translated the New Testament and the five books of Moses, and the rest was done by Miles Coverdale, afterwards Bishop of Exeter, with some assistance from Bilney and others. Tyndal did not live to witness this fruit of his labours, for he was betrayed by an acquaintance, and put to death as a heretic, in the Low Countries. But he died with the prayer upon his lips, "Lord, open the eyes of the king of England." The first edition of this translation was published in 1537, and was called Matthew's Bible, by a name which appears to have been fictitious. It was printed partly at Paris, under the supervision of John Rogers, afterwards the first sufferer in Mary's reign, and under the patronage of Bonner, who was then the king's ambassador to the court of France. Another and better edition came out in the year 1541, which is generally known as Cranmer's, because it had a preface written by him. It was required that each parish should be provided with a copy, which should be placed upon a desk in the body of the church, where all might come to read. It is said that some aged persons learned to read on purpose, and it may well be imagined with what thankfulness such a boon would be received by those who but a short time before were forced to hide the precious portions of God's word which they might possess, and go into the woods and fields to read it unobserved. When the first edition came out, Cranmer wrote to Cromwell that he "rejoiced to see this day of reformation, which he concluded was now risen in England, since THE LIGHT OF GOD'S WORD DID SHINE OVER IT WITHOUT A CLOUD."

Besides the Commentaries of Erasmus, already mentioned as having been placed with the Bible in churches towards the end of this reign, other books were set forth by authority at different times. The chief of these

were, an explanation of the Church services, containing some valuable matter mixed up with Romish doctrine; several editions of a collection of prayers called the King's Primer, and two books of devotional instruction. The first, entitled the *Institution of a Christian Man*, and called also the Bishops' Book, was drawn up with the consent of the convocation, and printed A.D. 1537, a year after some "Articles of Faith" had been agreed to, upon which it was grounded; but the second, which was intended to supersede it, was put forth after the act of the Six Articles, and was the result of deliberations among some of the bishops and other learned men, which were not concluded for three years: it was published with a preface from the king himself, by the title of the *Necessary Erudition of a Christian Man;* but it was also called the King's Book. It maintained and defined transubstantiation, whereas the Institution had been silent on the subject. Except in this point, the Erudition was an improvement upon the Institution. The Institution had commanded devotion to images, honouring of saints, and masses for the dead; whereas the Erudition omitted the mention of them, and advised the people to abstain from discussing the doctrine of purgatory, under colour of which it declared that great abuses had been advanced, to make men believe that masses said at prescribed places did in those places more profit the souls than in another: thus gradually did they begin to impugn the practice of private masses.

The latest edition of the Primer was published in the year 1546, the last of Henry's reign; but this was by no means the best edition, for several things were now omitted, when the king was become jealous of the progress of the reformed doctrine, which had been inserted, by way of caution against some prevailing errors, in the second edition published under Cranmer's auspices, in 1535. This book was intended, as its name imports, to be among the first things which young

persons should learn; but it was not designed for them alone, but for all classes of the people, being a collection of admirable prayers and devotions suited for all ages, many of which were taken from the old services of the Church, translated into English. In Cranmer's edition[1], the second commandment was distinguished from the first, and recited at length; whereas the Roman way of uniting them, and omitting the greater part of the second, was restored in the later copy. In this also there was a general confession of sins, an instruction how to pray, an explanation of the Lord's prayer, and an especial caution as to the *Ave Maria*, or Hail Mary,—that it is not a prayer to the Virgin, but that the grace and favour given her of God giveth us an occasion to praise God and give thanks. There were devotions for the seven hours of primitive worship, including a translation of the Matins and Evensong as then used in Latin; next came the Litany in English; a "Dirige" or Dirge for funerals and for the anniversary of the death of friends; the seven penitential psalms; the history of our Saviour's passion from the gospel of St. John; and, in conclusion, a great number of admirable prayers, of which those especially for the concord and for the peace of Christ's Church are replete with piety.

The Primer was not intended to be used by the minister in public worship, but to form the devotional manual of the people either in the closet or in church. For it was then the custom to resort to the churches for private as well as public prayer; and when the devout worshipper had such a book in his hand, and the Bible in his native language open for his perusal, much progress must have been made towards a better state of things, though the services themselves continued to be in Latin. We have cause to regret that we have lost

---

[1] The editor was Dr. Marshall, archdeacon of Nottingham, but he probably was employed and directed by Cranmer.

this practice of resorting to our churches at all times, and going down upon our knees to say our prayers, or read our Bibles. In one of the examinations of Anne Ayscough, she spoke of having been at Lincoln, and stayed there six days, and that she was daily in the Minster reading in the Bible. Who does not wish to see these noble churches again visited by such worshippers, and means afforded for private prayer or scripture reading, instead of their being made, as they are now, the resort of idle curiosity?

In the last year of his reign this king advanced yet another step, by ordering lessons from the Bible in English to be read after the Latin hymns, and the litany to be said or sung in English instead of Latin. This litany differs only in the following particulars from that now in use; after calling upon the holy Trinity, as at present, there followed three invocations, to the Virgin, the Angels, and all Patriarchs, Prophets, Apostles, Martyrs, to pray for us; and where we now pray to be delivered from sedition, privy conspiracy, and rebellion, these words were inserted, "From the tyranny of the bishop of Rome, and all his abominable enormities." It appears from a letter of Cranmer's to the king, that this litany was translated by him, with a few alterations, from one already in use. Henry, however, was preparing to go further than this. He had agreed with Francis, the French king, that they would each put forth a revised communion-service instead of the old Latin service of the mass, in the language of their respective countries; Cranmer had received orders to prepare that for England; and the two kings had resolved to invite the emperor to concur with them in the total abolition of the supremacy of the pope throughout their respective dominions.

It was about a year before Henry's death, on the 15th of December, 1545, that the first session was opened of the famous Council of Trent. It had become evident, that both Germany and France would follow the example of England, unless something was done

for reformation by the court of Rome; and Paul III. determined to hold a council, which he accordingly summoned to Mantua in 1536. But both France and England resolved not to acknowledge any council which should be held in Italy, under the immediate influence of the pope; and both these powers sent ambassadors to the Lutherans assembled at Smalcald, to dissuade them from agreeing to it. The pope next attempted to hold it at Vicenza, but against this Henry protested, and neither the emperor nor the French king would permit their bishops to attend. At length Trent was decided upon in 1542, but in the mean time the bull of excommunication had been published against Henry; so that, besides that the council was called in the name of the pope, instead of being in the name of Christian princes, Henry had now no option unless he chose to prejudge his own cause and come as a suppliant to the very authority which he had disavowed. Martin Luther died in the year 1546, soon after the council had begun to sit, but his death made little difference in its proceedings. The subjects of discussion were of two kinds, discipline and doctrine, and some very important improvements in discipline were adopted, and very salutary regulations made. They would have been, indeed, much more so, had not the pope overruled them. The Spanish bishops were earnest to go to the root of the evil of non-residence, by declaring that a bishop's residence was of divine obligation and indispensable; and many of the Gallican Church were desirous to have had the pragmatic sanction re-established. But in point of doctrine they were not so fortunate. They did not as yet meddle with transubstantiation and similar points; but in their anxiety to counteract what they deemed Lutheran errors, they reckoned some things as Lutheran tenets which no Protestant holds; and they proceeded to establish as doctrines of the Church, some points which can scarcely be thought to be probable opinions, much less ought they to be positively required as part of Christian faith,—such as, that traditions are part of

divine revelation—that all the books of Scripture, including those called apocryphal, are of equal authority—and that the old Latin translation of the Bible, called the Vulgate, should be received as of equal authority with the original Greek and Hebrew. These decisions were not calculated to promote the peace of Christendom; and that relating to tradition especially has done almost irreparable mischief; for when people saw it placed on a level with Scripture, they went to the other extreme of denying that any respect at all is due to the collective voice of antiquity. How much it tended at the time to widen the breach between the two parties, may be judged by the mention which Bernard Gilpin makes of its effect upon his own mind. He was then a young man, anxiously seeking the truth, and hesitating between the fear of schism, and the duty of following the word of God. And his prepossessions in favour of Rome were first shaken by this decision.

Such were the first acts of this famous synod, for which the Church of Rome claims the allegiance of the whole of Christendom, as a general council of the universal Church. But it wants no fewer than three requisites to entitle it to that character. First, it was not called by the consent of the Christian princes of the countries over which it claims authority, but by the sole authority of the bishop of Rome without consulting them. Secondly, so far from representing the whole Christian world, it did not even represent more than one half of Europe. No bishops were present from Poland, none from Sweden or Denmark, England or Ireland, very few from any part of Germany, and none at all from several of its independent states; to say nothing of the whole of the Greek Church, embracing Russia and its provinces, the Christians in Greece and in European and Asiatic Turkey. Thirdly, in not one of these countries, except Poland, has it ever been acknowledged; whereas it was always deemed essential to the ratification of a council that it should be universally received. These points may to some appear of

little importance; but when the Roman Church places its claim to our allegiance on the decrees of this council, and denounces us as heretics, separate from Christian communion, because we will not adopt them, we cannot tell how important it may become to show that this council is not entitled to that character, which by a singular coincidence, was omitted in describing it. For it was proposed when the synod was opened, that the words "representing the Universal Church of Christ" should be added to its title; but the proposal was overruled by the pope's legates, of whom Cardinal Pole was one, not because they did not claim that character for the synod, but lest it should be inferred that the pope himself is subject to the council.

CHAPTER XVIII.

EDWARD VI. PROTECTOR SOMERSET. HOMILIES. SUPPRESSION OF CHANTRIES.

> This pretty lad will prove our country's bliss,
> His looks are full of peaceful majesty;
> His head by nature framed to wear a crown,
> His hand to wield a sceptre; and himself
> Likely, in time, to bless a regal throne.
> Make much of him, my Lords.
>
> SHAKSPEARE.—*Hen. VI.*

THE reign of Edward VI., if regarded only in reference to the temporal prosperity of his subjects, would not be calculated to excite any feelings of satisfaction. We see the people poor and discontented, and the nobles actuated often by selfish motives even in their adherence to religious improvements. But this is not the only way in which history may be read. It is possible to divest even the sacred records of their religious lesson, if we will regard the events which they relate apart from that commentary which the Spirit of God reveals; and on the other hand, it is also possible to trace amidst the selfishness of man, the overruling Providence of God, directing that very selfishness to the accomplishment of his own mysterious but beneficent designs. And the character of the princely boy himself who presided over the changes that now took place, was worthy of one appointed to such a destiny.

Edward, the sixth since the Conquest[1], was born on

---

[1] The Norman Edwards, and other sovereigns for three or four centuries after the Conquest, did not designate themselves absolutely as the first or second king of England of their name, but as the first or second, (or, as the case might be) *since the Con-*

the 12th of October, 1537, and had not, therefore, completed his tenth year when he succeeded to the throne, on the death of his father, in January, 1547. The wisdom of his father was in nothing more conspicuous than in the choice of preceptors for his son; for he did not suffer his own religious prejudices to prevent him from selecting good and learned men, though they might be disposed to carry the Reformation much further than he was himself. The first of these was Sir Anthony Cook, to whose care the young Edward was entrusted when only six years of age. But those to whom belong especially the praise of having formed his character, were Dr. Richard Cox, afterwards Dean of Christ Church, and lastly Bishop of Ely, and Sir John Cheek, professor of Greek at Cambridge. The natural talents of their royal pupil and his progress in all human learning, were such as to move the admiration of elder scholars; his amiable temper, which shone forth in his conversation, made it appear as though his soul was the abode of all the virtues, and his gravity and piety gained him the name of the Youthful Saint[1]. There are now remaining in the British Museum letters of his in French and Latin, written before he was nine years old, and at thirteen he was reading Aristotle in the Greek. His virtues were regarded by good men at the time as a singular blessing to his country, and many expressed their belief that it was an answer to their prayers. But this early promise rather encouraged hopes for the future, than aided counsels for the present. The unsettled state of things was left to the direction of statesmen little agreed among themselves,

---

quest. This style was adopted even by those sovereigns whose christian name had never been borne by a Saxon king, as Richard II.: *Ricardus, post conquistum secundus.* It is to be regretted that we have lost this vestige of a recognition of our Anglo-Saxon Monarchs; two of whom by the name of Edward have a place in our calendar.

[1] Roger Ascham, *Epist.* i. 2, and ii. 29.

and none of sufficient capacity and influence, nor, indeed, of sufficient character and principles, to preside firmly at the helm of state. Cranmer, therefore, judged with some reason that his difficulties were rather increased than diminished by the death of a king, of whom his daughter, the Princess Mary, truly said, that "he was a prince not only of power, but of knowledge how to order his power."

The chief of these ministers was the young king's maternal uncle, Edward Seymour, Earl of Hertford, who was now created Duke of Somerset, and made protector of the realm and governor of the king's person. He was a man who had been employed in military services under Henry VIII., in which he had shown fidelity and courage; his manners were mild and conciliating, and his popularity was secured by the desire which he professed for an object he kept steadily in view—the improvement of the condition of the poorer classes. His religious sentiments, as far as they were declared, were in favour of the reformed doctrine; and it appears from a beautiful prayer found afterwards among his papers, that he did not enter upon his office without a solemn devotion of himself to God, and a committal of his cause to the guidance of his providence. "Thou, Lord, by thine order, hast committed an anointed king to my governance, direct me with thy hand that I err not from thy good pleasure. . . . . I ask victory, but to show thy power upon the wicked. I ask prosperity, but for to rule in peace thy congregation. I ask wisdom, but by my counsel to set forth thy cause." But if Somerset desired to serve God, he was willing also to serve the world. Even his very office of Protector he obtained, not indeed without the consent of the other counsellors named by the late king, but by no direct appointment from him, and not without some contrivance of his own. And this very prayer betrays the deception he was practising upon himself, in attributing that power to the will of God which he had in some measure obtained by his own management. It is

not surprising that such beginnings should have ended as they did. Open, generous, and undesigning, he made no secret of his intentions, and thought himself secure in the affection of the people whose cause he honestly espoused against the oppression of the nobility. But proud and vainglorious, he assumed royal state, and thinking himself religious because he opposed popery, he made it consist with his religion to enrich himself with the plunder of the Church. The signal victory which he obtained over the Scots at the battle of Pinkey, in the first year of his government, confirmed his power for the time, though it probably tended to augment that vainglory which in the end contributed to his ruin.

It had been the policy of the two kings of the house of Tudor to take every means to depress the power of the old nobility of England. They had procured laws to restrain the number of their retainers, and they had carefully excluded them from the highest offices of government. There was a good reason for this. The public peace had been continually disturbed by them and their factions, from the time of Richard II. till the wars of York and Lancaster; and Henry VII. had still battles to fight and rebellions to put down, after he had gained his throne. He judged, therefore, that he might more certainly rely on the fidelity of those who owed their exaltation to himself, and whose greatness was not placed on an eminence obtained by ancestral honours. This system worked well, while the throne was filled by monarchs of vigorous age, with talents for command. It did much to bring forward the gentry of the middle ranks, and the mercantile interest, and to give stability to the order of society. But it had this inconvenience. The men who were now employed in public business were commonly of low origin and needy; for after the downfall of Church-power, it was no longer possible to employ clergymen, like Archbishop Morton and Wolsey, who might be paid without expense to the king, by being advanced to great prefer-

ments. The plan now pursued, begun by Henry VIII., and carried on without much check during this reign, was to give these ministers grants of abbey lands or other church-endowments; and some of them, who were intended to receive a peerage, declined the honour, because they were not to receive with it what their circumstances made them consider the most substantial part of the benefit.

Of such men was the council of state under Somerset composed. Every one, except the bishops who belonged to it, was on the watch for spoils; and as the monks and all that they had were by this time nearly disposed of, they began to turn their attention to the bishops' lands, and the property of the chantries and colleges. Somerset had received grants of three religious houses from Henry VIII.; he now procured himself five or six more, among which were the rich nunnery of Sion near Brentford, and Glastonbury, which he turned into a worsted manufactory for some French Protestant refugees.

There was still something of public spirit in the uses to which he turned his acquisition; it was the dignity of his office, not his private wealth, which he sought to advance. Others were influenced by baser motives, and peculation in sales, falsifying their accounts, and retaining good part of the price, as was confessed by several who were accused of it. But the ostentation of Somerset, and the small thefts of other officers of state, were all far outdone by the grasping avarice and cold ambition of John Dudley, Viscount Lisle, afterwards Earl of Warwick and Duke of Northumberland, who was preparing to play a prominent part in the proceedings of this reign[1].

The causes of this irreligious profligacy it is easy to trace. The impostures and superstitions of the exploded

[1] He was the son of Dudley, the minister of Henry VII., who was executed by Henry VIII. together with Empson, in the beginning of his reign.

system had disgusted and revolted the minds of the nobles and gentry, which had now begun to be cultivated by learning; and they were in a state bordering on unbelief. Besides, there was now a common practice for young men of family to go abroad on travel, or reside, as attached to embassies, in foreign courts. There was a great admiration of foreign manners, particularly of Italian, that country having now the repute of being the most polite in Europe, and having taken the lead in the revival of learning. But the vices of Italy were more easily imitated than its works of genius and wonders of art; and the English residents became so conspicuous for this kind of imitation, that even the Italians had a proverb against them[1]. There were many men in the court of the young Edward, who had studied the political writings of Machiavelli, and learnt to separate religion from rules of state, and to treat the common sort of men as the prey of the more ingenious and longheaded. Others, of a more military turn, had fallen in with some of the companies of adventurers in the emperor's service, and thought the Church might be turned to good account in raising the like at home; as Sir Philip Hobbey, master of the ordnance, who proposed to suppress all the cathedral clergy, and turn their stalls into a fund for an artillery corps. But what tended still more to the corruption of morals was that idle romances were now imported from Italy and Spain, translated into English, and read with too much effect, as they ever will be, by the young and susceptible. These works are often mentioned by writers of the age of Elizabeth. Their names are now forgotten; and we have had others to succeed them of native growth. They were often the production of Italian monks and priests[2], and were a proof of the state of discipline in

[1] "Inglese Italianato e diavolo incarnato." "An Englishman turned Italian is a devil incarnate." A proverb mentioned by Ascham and other writers of the time.

[2] Pope Pius II. (Æneas Silvius Piccolomini), was himself the author of a romance, which is still extant.

that country, and that it was safer to be of no religion than to deny transubstantiation. It was in the memory of some of the English clergy, that Cardinal Campegio, the pope's nuncio, who, as we have seen, held an English bishopric a few years before, had publicly maintained that it was much more befitting a priest to live as St. Augustine did before his conversion, than to wed a wife. In short, the spirit of covetousness was encouraged by irreligion and immorality; and the sanctity of life which should have been the barrier against sacrilege, was not found among those who ministered at the Church's altars.

Such were the times and men, when Cranmer, having witnessed the destructive part of the Reformation carried out with all its crimes, was called upon to use redoubled efforts to construct a system of faith and worship to revive the dying Church. It was well that some sense of religion was yet alive in the breast of Somerset, and that the young king had a heart tender to impressions of piety; for while one set of his courtiers were instilling into his mind maxims of Italian policy, others were contriving to remove the Bible from his chamber, and to substitute an effeminate romance in its place [1].

The state of affairs, as regards religion, was not immediately affected by the death of Henry. Several indeed who were imprisoned under the Six Articles were set at liberty; among them Coverdale and Hooper, afterwards bishops, and Philpot and Rogers, both of whom as well as Hooper were put to death under Mary. Nor was there the same facility of prosecution for religious opinions. For Dr. John Harley, of Magdalen College, at Oxford, afterwards also a bishop, and a confessor, having been sent up a prisoner to London, for preaching against popery, was liberated without a trial.

---

[1] STRYPE, *Eccl. Mem.*, Ed. VI., b. 1, ch. xiii. ASCHAM'S Works, p. 254, Ed. 1771.

The people also began in some places to show their expectation and desire of a change, by taking down images from the churches, and setting up the king's arms where the Holy Rood had been placed. The Holy Rood was a crucifix placed over the entrance to the chancel, representing the body of our Saviour on the cross; and whatever may be thought of the impropriety of having such images of our Redeemer, it must have seemed irreverent to substitute the king's arms in their place; but it does not appear that this was ever commanded[1], and if so, the universal adoption of the practice seems to imply that the royal supremacy was popular. But in the royal injunctions issued immediately after this time, it was ordered that all such images as had been abused to superstition should be removed, and this was enlarged the next year by an order in council, extending to all images whatsoever. The consequences, however, of these directions are not to be confounded with that mutilation of our churches which was accomplished by the Puritans in the time of Charles I., when the beautiful statues which adorned the exterior of most cathedrals were broken and disfigured.

The party who were adverse to any further change, endeavoured to found their opposition on the fact that the king was a minor, and that as he was head of the Church, nothing ought to be done in the matter of religion until he was able to judge and act for himself. Gardiner especially, who was at the head of that party, and was an able, and in some respects a learned man, wrote to the Protector to remonstrate:—"Some," said he, "are for one new thing, some for another, till they have nothing old left them but their folly;" and this sentence is characteristic enough of the disposition and temper of the man. More of a statesman than of a divine, with a strong intellect exercised in the ways of the world, he was content with the religion that he found, and attributed religious zeal to a defective un-

[1] See Burnet's Answer to Saunders, vol. ii., Append. p, 355.

derstanding. But Cranmer had now the power to carry on the Reformation, and was resolved to avail himself of it. Holgate, Archbishop of York, was willing to concur, and four other bishops were decidedly in his favour, one of whom was Ridley, who had been nominated to the See of Rochester before the late king's death[1].

But it was no part of Cranmer's character to innovate thoughtlessly or hastily. He weighed every step he took, and never acted without having investigated for himself. First, therefore, he endeavoured to give effect to every thing that had been ordered in the late reign, and then to proceed upon the steps that had been agreed upon for a further progress. The Convocation had resolved in 1542, that a book of Homilies should be prepared, and although Gardiner now objected that this decision had been superseded by the publication of the *Erudition of a Christian Man*, it was determined to act upon it. Twelve homilies were drawn up under Cranmer's directions, three of which were written by himself on Salvation, Faith, and Works. That on Salvation was also called at the time the homily of Justification, and is so referred to in the Articles. It maintained the doctrine so strongly advocated by Luther and the continental reformers, of justification by faith alone, and was immediately objected to on that account by Gardiner and his party. Cranmer defended it on the ground that the object was "only to set out the freedom of God's mercy," which is precisely the same ground on which the same doctrine was afterwards explained by Bishop Jewel.

The bishops under Henry VIII., and Bonner among the rest, had received the patent of their offices under a clause, that they were to retain them during the king's pleasure, like the judges or other officers of state. And they were now obliged, as it would seem with the

[1] The others were Holbeach of Lincoln, Gooderick of Ely, and Barlow of St. David's.

advice of Cranmer, to take out new commissions to the same purpose, under a new sovereign. The design was to leave no question as to the acknowledgment of the royal supremacy; but the archbishop has been much blamed for it, as if he had thus meant to acknowledge, that a king can make a bishop, without regard to the succession of this order from the apostles. Such an accusation seems entirely unfounded. A king's authority to a bishop to exercise his function is quite distinct from a claim to the power of consecration. The power of consecration Cranmer doubtless believed to reside in the order of bishops, and to be derived to them, not from the king but from God; but he thought that they should consecrate other bishops as the king should command them, and hold their office and exercise their functions only in obedience to the laws of the land. The case of a government which should attempt to abolish the order of episcopacy had never yet occurred, nor is it probable that the thought of it had entered Cranmer's mind. "The ministration of God's word," he said, "which our Lord Jesus Christ did first institute, was derived from the apostles unto others after them by imposition of hands and giving of the Holy Ghost, from the apostles' time to our days. This was the consecration, orders, and unction of the apostles, whereby they at the beginning made bishops and priests, and this shall continue in the Church even to the world's end[1]." Again, in complaining of Gardiner, who had objected to his title of Metropolitan, he said he feared that Diotrephes, who *loved to have the pre-eminence in the Church*, had found more successors than all the apostles. "But I would that I and all my brethren the bishops, would leave our glorious styles and titles, and write the style of our offices, calling ourselves *apostles of Jesus Christ;* so that we took not upon us the name vainly, but were even so in deed; so

[1] Sermon on the Keys, in the translation of Justus Jonas's Catechism.

that we might order our dioceses in such sort, that neither paper, parchment, lead, nor wax, might be the letters and seals of our offices, but the very Christian conversation of the people, as the Corinthians were unto Paul, to whom he said, *our epistle and seal of our apostleship are ye*[1]." These are not the words of a man who looked upon his commission as dependent on the patent of any earthly power.

Next followed a general visitation of the kingdom by commissioners appointed by the crown, under the authority imparted to the council by King Henry's will[2]. And as the bishops had just renewed their commissions to exercise their functions during the king's pleasure, their authority was suspended for a time while this visitation was carried on. Such interference with the episcopal functions, however, has never since been attempted, and this condition was not exacted from the new bishops appointed in this reign. The injunctions delivered by the commissioners in this royal visitation to the clergy of each Rural Deanery, are a valuable record of the state of religion as left by Henry VIII., both as regards the vestiges of a former state of things, and the indications of an approaching change. They began by requiring all ecclesiastical persons, four times in the year at least, to preach against the usurped authority of the bishop of Rome. The clergy were next commanded to abstain from extolling images and relics, and not to allow any lights before images, but only two lights upon the high altar, "for the signification that Christ is the very light of the world[3]." They

[1] Letter cxlvii.

[2] Which authority Henry had the power to impart under an Act of Parliament, 28 Hen. VIII. c. 7, and 35 Hen. VIII. c. 1. —See CARDWELL'S *Documentary Annals*, i. 5, where these injunctions are given at length, which is not done by Collier or Burnet.

[3] It does not seem that this injunction for having the lights upon the altar is now in force. They were to be placed *before the sacrament*. Transubstantiation was still the doctrine of the Eng-

were to provide a large Bible and the Commentaries of Erasmus for every church, and discourage no man from reading the Bible: they were to examine all who came to them for confession, as to their knowledge of the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments, and admit none to the "blessed Sacrament of the altar" who did not know them. They were to keep a book for registering baptisms, burials, and weddings; and to provide a strong chest, with a hole in the upper part of it, into which the parishioners should put their oblation and alms for the poor. All non-resident clergy of a certain income, were publicly to give away a tenth part of their income to the poor of the place whence it was derived; chantry priests were to exercise themselves in teaching youth to read and write; and whoever had a hundred a year in church preferment, (equal perhaps to more than a thousand now,) was to maintain a poor scholar either at Oxford or Cambridge. In divine service the Epistle and Gospel read at high mass were to be in English, a chapter of the New Testament in English was to be read at matins, and a chapter of the Old Testament at evensong; and immediately before high mass, the Litany, which used to be chanted in procession, whence that service was also called a Procession, was to be said or sung in English by the priests and choir, kneeling in the middle of the church. This injunction as to the place at which the Litany shall be said, was renewed under Queen Elizabeth, and has not since been rescinded. It is self-evident, how much it would tend to give life and reality to our devotions, if the priest were now to kneel

---

lish Church: and as the Host was always kept upon the altar, the lights were probably in honour of the supposed corporeal presence of the Redeemer; whereas in the Injunctions put forth A.D. 1549, after the passing of the Act of Uniformity, the clergy were ordered to omit the reading of all such (previous) injunctions "as make mention of the popish mass, of chantries, of *candles upon the altar*, or any such like thing."

during this service in the midst of the people; to say nothing of the scriptural allusion, "that the priests, the ministers of the Lord, should weep between the porch and the altar, and say, Spare thy people, O Lord, spare them."

The first parliament of King Edward assembled in November, 1547, and with it, as usual, the convocation of the clergy. The proceedings of both were of the greatest importance. The convocation passed a vote for communion in both kinds, and for the marriage of the clergy. The first of these resolutions was unanimous; that for the marriage of the clergy was carried in the Lower House by thirty-five against fourteen. They also petititioned that the reformation of the Ecclesiastical Laws, begun in the late reign, might be continued; and that the divines and others, appointed to revise the Church Services, might proceed with their labours[1]. The Parliament began by repealing all the statutes against heretics, including the odious act of the Six Articles. The law of Henry IV. had been already repealed, and it might have been hoped that the intention was now to abolish the punishment of death for religious belief; but, unhappily, we shall find proof in this very reign, that the common law was still sufficient for the purpose. It was next enacted, that the mass should be changed into a communion, and that the Sacrament should be administered to all persons under both kinds; and thus this long-desired boon was restored to the people by the full consent both of the clergy and the Parliament. But the permission for the marriage of the clergy, though carried in their convocation, could not pass as yet, and was deferred till the following session. A very important alteration was also made in the law for the appointment of bishops.

---

[1] The remarkable petition of this convocation for the restoration of the proctors of the clergy to their seats in the Lower House of Parliament, belongs rather to civil than to ecclesiastical history.

We have seen that Henry VIII. had not actually altered the mode of their appointment which he found, but had obliged the chapters then entitled to elect, to choose his nominee; but it was now enacted, that no election should take place at all, but that the crown should nominate the bishop by letters patent[1]. This law having been repealed with the rest by Queen Mary, was not re-enacted by Elizabeth, so that the mode of election established by Henry resumed its force, and is now the law in England, but the Irish bishops are still nominated directly by the crown. Another law passed by this Parliament was for the dissolution of chantries and colleges. These had been granted to the late king just before his death, but as he had not got possession another law was required for the purpose, and it met with great opposition in both Houses. It was foreseen that the nobles wanted these revenues for themselves, while Cranmer, who had in vain interposed to rescue the lands of the monasteries for religious purposes, was the more anxious that these should be devoted to such objects, as the loss of the impropriate tithes had almost deprived a great many churches of any ministry at all. He argued, therefore, that the dissolution should be deferred till the king should come of age. But those who assisted him in overruling this argument when Gardiner would have used it to stop the reformation, now overruled him in his turn, and all colleges, chantries, and free chapels, with the exception of the public schools and universities, were given to the king. Their number was two thousand three hundred and seventy-four, and among them the chapel of St. Stephen's, at Westminster, afterwards so long used as

[1] This seems a remarkable instance of the tendency of human affairs to be altered for the worse by temporary expedients. If it be a sort of contradiction to allow certain presbyters to elect their bishop, and yet compel them to choose a particular person, the obvious way would be to release them from that compulsion, not to deprive them of the vestige of their rights.

the Commons' House of Parliament, became vested in the crown. The act professed that their estates should be converted to godly uses, in erecting grammar-schools, in further augmenting the Universities, and making better provision for the poor. It was out of these lands that those called King Edward's Grammar Schools were endowed in so many parts of England, but a large proportion of the property was shared amongst the courtiers.

CHAPTER XIX.

COMMUNION SERVICE IN ENGLISH. FIRST REFORMED LITURGY.

"When we had heard God himself speaking to us in his words, and had seen and considered the illustrious examples of the ancient and primitive Church, and that the expectation of a General Council was uncertain, and the event that would follow it much more uncertain, and especially when we had the utmost certainty what was the will of God; and therefore thought it a sin to be too solicitous or anxious what the opinion of men might be; after all this, I say, we conferred not with flesh and blood, but proceeded and have accordingly done that which both may lawfully be done, and which already been often done by many pious men and catholic bishops, that is, to take care of our own Church in a provincial synod."—JEWEL'S *Apology*.

IT remained to give effect to those important matters which had been resolved upon by the convocation and the parliament; and the bishops proceeded to examine the service for the mass, with a view to putting it forth in English. Several attempts had been made in the time of Henry VIII., to agree upon a general confession of faith for all the reformed Churches. But they proved ineffectual, because he would not give up the practice of private masses. In the year 1538, the ambassadors of the German princes wrote to him that "Whereas the mass is and ought to be nothing else than a communion, as Paul calls it, and was used no otherwise in the primitive church, as may be shown from the holy fathers, something quite different has now been made of it, and wholly repugnant to the communion, and to the true use of the mass[1]." And they added, "That it is plain that private masses are recent, introduced by the Roman Pontiff, and not

[1] BURNET, Appendix, i., 304, 308.

even in the present day admitted in the Greek Church." A year later it appears that Luther and Melancthon and the German States had been willing to retain the service of the mass, if only they might have abolished private masses; and this seems to have been proposed as a general plan of pacification with the Church of Rome[1]. But the state of affairs as regards the foreign Protestants was materially altered: it was now about ten years since the Elector Frederick, the devoted adherent of the reformation in Germany, had been deposed and imprisoned by the Emperor Charles V.; and about the same time that Herman, elector and archbishop of Cologne, who had attempted a reform of religion in his dominions on catholic principles, had been excommunicated and deposed. In this state of things it was the more necessary for the English Church to look to itself alone; and the parliament and convocation having both sanctioned the measure, a committee of sixteen bishops and six other divines was appointed including Bonner, but not Gardiner, to carry their intentions into effect.

Their consultations were carried on in writing, and they supply us with authentic information as to the state of opinions at that time. In the first place they were nearly agreed that private masses for souls departed should be abolished. They agreed also that it was to be wished that the people would always communicate with the priest; but they were not all of a mind as to the discontinuance of the private celebration of mass by the priest when the people will not partake; and still less so as to the meaning and nature of the oblation in the eucharist. Private masses were of two kinds: first, the mass itself, as celebrated at that time in England and still continued in the Church of Rome, was for the most part a private commemoration by the priest, and not a communion. This practice was stated by Tonstal to have arisen from

[1] See COLLIER, 5, 44, (New Edit.)

the slackness of the people in coming to the daily communions of the early Church, in consequence of which the priest was obliged to receive alone; and this was not denied by Cranmer, though he thought the practice did not prevail for the first six hundred years. But there was much diversity in the answers to the question now proposed among the bishops, "What is the oblation and sacrifice of Christ in the mass?" Cranmer said, "The oblation and sacrifice of Christ in the mass is not so called because Christ is indeed there offered and sacrificed by the priest and the people, for that was done but once by himself upon the cross; but it is so called because it is a memory and representation of that very true sacrifice and immolation which was before made upon the cross." But on the other hand, Bonner and five other bishops maintained, "That it is the presentation of the very body and blood of Christ, being really present in the sacrament;" while the bishop of Carlisle ventured to assert, that "The oblation and sacrifice of Christ in the mass, *is even the same which was offered by Christ on the cross.*" It was however agreed by Bonner and his party that the "Sacrifice of thanks," that is, the eucharist, is to be received not of one man for another, but of every man for himself, and thus a foundation was laid for what was then called "changing the mass into a communion."

But as for masses satisfactory, or as they were then usually called private masses, the case was somewhat different. It was held by the early Church that the representation of the memorials of the precious death of Christ is acceptable to God for the sake of that atoning death, and so draws down His favour upon the whole Church as well as upon those who partake in the celebration. But this notion of drawing down God's favour upon the whole Church came by degrees to include the spirits of departed friends, as being still a part of the communion of saints, for whose peace and final acceptance it was not forbidden to pray even before

the notion of purgatory came to be adopted. And as the primitive Christians were accustomed to celebrate the holy communion at funerals, it came to be thought that masses satisfactory might be offered which should be available to the especial benefit of those souls for whom they were intended. But when purgatory had become a popular substitute in people's minds for hell itself, nothing was more natural than that they should desire to procure such masses for the sake of liberating their friends from that imaginary abode. Nor was this all: when such masses were deemed available to the especial benefit of particular persons, it was held that they might be offered as sacrifices were under the law, for the obtaining of any particular blessings. If a prince went to battle, masses were said for his success; if a nobleman was ill, masses were said for his recovery, and similar offerings were sometimes made for more questionable purposes, and for objects for which good men would deem it presumptuous to pray. The priests were accustomed to take money for the performance of these masses, as well as for those which were offered for the dead, which were usually performed in what was called Trentals, that is, thirty by the year, celebrated by three at a time on particular festivals. We have seen that the chantry priests had often other duties besides these celebrations; but it was always a condition of the endowment that they should say mass for the health of the living and for the souls of the faithful dead, especially of the founder, his family and friends; and as they had private altars in the chantries where they officiated, the notion of a communion could hardly enter at all into the services which were there performed.

The immediate result of these consultations, and of the decisions of the parliament and convocation, was that a service was drawn up for the administration of the holy communion to the people under both kinds, which was appointed to come into use on Easter day, 1548. This book left the Latin service of that part of

the mass in which the consecration takes place, and only added some prayers and an exhortation in English. This exhortation was to be said on the preceding Sunday or holy-day, and was nearly the same as that which is now in use, and at the time of celebration, when the priest had gone through the usual service of the mass, making no difference except in consecrating wine for the congregation, and had received himself, he was to say the address which we now use, "Dearly beloved in the Lord," and then, after a caution to such as might not yet be fit to come, having paused to see if any man would withdraw, he proceeded to the invitation, "You that do truly and earnestly repent you of your sins." The general confession which followed, "Almighty God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Maker of all things, Judge of all men,"—might be said either by the priest or deacon, or by one of the communicants in the name of the rest. Then came the absolution, beginning thus, instead of the words now used, "Our blessed Lord, who hath left power to his Church to absolve penitent sinners from their sins, and to restore to the grace of the heavenly Father such as truly believe in Christ,—have mercy upon you." The prayer "We do not presume to come to this thy table," was the same as now, immediately after which the consecrated elements were delivered with these words only: "The body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for thee, preserve thy body unto everlasting life." "The blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was shed for thee, preserve thy soul unto everlasting life." When all had partaken, the congregration was dismissed with the blessing without any further prayer or hymn. No change was here made in the doctrine as to the presence of Christ in the sacrament; but there was a material alteration respecting confession, which had hitherto been absolutely required of all persons since the thirteenth century, but which was now, by the words of the exhortation, left to the option of the party. But this service was not intended to be any other than a

temporary measure, for it was accompanied by a proclamation, in which a promise was given of "other such godly orders as might be most to God's glory, the edifying of the people, and for the advancement of true religion." In the meantime, other proclamations had been issued forbidding people to discuss the nature of the sacrament of the altar, and interdicting any of the clergy from preaching, except in their own churches, unless specially licensed for the purpose; the object being to prevent variety of doctrine, until the new order for divine service should be completed.

In the summer of this year, A.D. 1548, was published what is commonly called Cranmer's Catechism. It is not the same as that which is now printed in the Prayer Book as the Church Catechism, but was an explanation of the Ten Commandments, the Creed, and the Lord's Prayer, drawn up in short sermons for the instruction of the young. This work was originally written in German, and translated into Latin by Justus Jonas, a Lutheran divine, who was at this time residing with the archbishop. It was translated into English, if not by Cranmer himself, under his immediate superintendence, and some alterations and additions were made by him. The Lutheran tenet of the Corporeal Presence was explained spiritually, and an entire discourse was added on the second commandment. The Lutheran Church did not depart from the Romish division of the ten commandments, omitting the second, and dividing the tenth into two. This division was retained in this catechism, but after the explanation of the first, the archbishop added that the more gross idolatry of worshipping images is also forbidden in this commandment, quoting the words of the second commandment to that effect, and adding, that "These words by most interpreters of late time are made to belong to the first commandment, although, after the interpretation of many ancient authors, they are the second commandment." He then enlarges upon the practice which he calls "the abuse of our time," of having images in churches, and

especially condemns those pictures of the Trinity in which God the Father was represented, quoting St. Augustine's opinion, that "it is a detestable thing for Christian men to have any such image of God in the church." This catechism is further remarkable as containing a very strong recommendation of the practice of confession, and an equally decided opinion in favour of what is called the power of the Keys, and the divine authority of the Christian ministry.

The commissioners appointed to draw up a Book of Common Prayer, had assembled at Windsor on the 9th of May, A.D. 1548, and it was fitting that such a work should be carried on at the royal abode of the first monarch who had placed himself at the head of the reformed party, and professed the reformed faith. Their labours were continued through the summer, A.D. 1548, and as it was found that not only the clergy in general, but some even of the licensed preachers did not refrain from expressing their wishes or opinions respecting the various important matters to be comprised in the new Prayer Book, it was thought fit to interdict all preaching whatsoever for a short time until the book should be completed. The object of this was declared to be, "that the clergy might apply themselves to prayer for a blessing on what the king was about to do; not doubting but the people would be employed likewise in prayer and hearing the homilies read in their churches, and be ready to receive that uniform order that was to be set forth." The parliament met in November, and the first business submitted to them relating to the affairs of the Church, was the marriage of the clergy, which the convocation had agreed to the year before, but which did not then pass through parliament. It was now agreed to, though not without difficulty, and with this restriction: "That it were better for the ministers of the Church to live chaste and without marriage; whereby they might better attend to the ministry of the gospel and be less distracted with secular cares; but since great evils had followed on the

laws that prohibited marriage, it was better they should be suffered to marry than so restrained." It is to be observed that the vows of celibacy taken by the clergy in some countries, had not of late years been imposed upon the English clergy in general, but only on those belonging to the monastic orders; but as this act seemed to convey some stigma, notwithstanding, on those who chose to marry, another law was passed three years afterwards, in which those words were omitted.

While the parliament was thus employed, the new liturgy was submitted to the convocation, which met also in November, and having been agreed to by that body, it was brought into parliament, where a law was passed in the 21st of January, 1549, since known as the Act of Uniformity[1], which declared that the bishops and other learned men had now, "by the aid of the Holy Ghost," concluded upon one uniform order of divine worship, having respect to the pure religion of Christ taught in scripture, and to the practice of the primitive Church; and it was therefore enacted that from the feast of Whit Sunday next all divine offices should be performed according to it. Another law that was now made, enjoined the observance of fasting on Fridays and Saturdays, on the Ember days, and during Lent, which practice seems to have been already in danger of being discontinued, through the reaction that was taking place[2].

---

[1] 2 and 3 Edw. VI. c. 1.

[2] As the sentiments of Bishop Burnet will not be suspected of leaning too much to what are called "High Church opinions," it may perhaps be useful to subjoin what he says on this occasion. "It was much lamented then, and there is as much cause for it still, that carnal men have taken advantages from the abuses that were formerly practised, to throw off good and profitable institutions; since the frequent use of fasting with prayer and true devotion joined to it, is perhaps one of the greatest helps that can be devised, to advance one to a spiritual temper of mind, and to promote a holy course of life. And the mockery that is discernable in the way of some men's fasting, is a very slight excuse for

The new liturgy was used at Easter in some places where the clergy were favourable to it, though the law did not require it to be adopted before Whit Sunday, on which day, being the 10th of June, in the year 1549, it was solemnly performed at St. Paul's Cathedral and in most other churches in the kingdom. The day of Pentecost was fitly chosen as that on which a National Church should first return after so many centuries to the celebration of divine service in the native tongue, and it is a day to be much observed in this Church of England among all our generations for ever. The actual change introduced by this service was not so great as might at first be supposed. The litany had been already used in English, since the end of the late reign, as well as a lesson from the Old and New Testament, after one of the Latin hymns at matins and evensong. By an injunction in the present reign, the epistle and gospel at the mass were also in English, besides the communion service lately put forth. A considerable part of the old Latin service for matins and evensong had been already translated in the King's Primer, and what was now done, as regards that part of divine worship, was chiefly to leave out all rubrics and prayers which had reference to indulgences or which contained prayers to the Virgin or other saints, and to order the old hymns and collects which had remained from primitive times to be said or sung in English. Accordingly, the morning service, which was still called the Matins, began, not as now with the exhortation, confession, and absolution, but with the Lord's Prayer and the sentences following, after which, between Easter and Trinity Sunday, hallelujah was to

---

any to lay aside the use of that which the Scriptures have so much recommended."—*Hist. Ref.*, vol. ii. p. 91. Thomas Becon, a learned Reformer, who was rector of St. Stephen's Walbrook, in this reign, in his *Potation for Lent*, quotes the words of St. Basil, "Thou shalt find that fasting hath made all the saints friends and neighbours unto God."

be added. The 95th Psalm preceded the psalms for the day, as at present, and after the first lesson Te Deum was to be in English, except in Lent, and then the Song of the Three Children instead. The Benedictus followed the second lesson, without any option of having the 100th Psalm instead, which was added when the book was revised. The Apostles' Creed also was not introduced in the first Prayer Book, but as soon as the hymn after the second lesson was finished, the Lord's Prayer was repeated with what is called the Smaller Litany, as we now have it, and then the service closed with the collect for the day, and the two other collects, for peace, and for grace. No alteration was made in the time at which this office was to be used, which was then about six in the morning. The evensong corresponded in all particulars. The only hymns to be used after the lessons were the *Magnificat* and the *Nunc dimittis*. The second and third collects were the same as those now in use at evening prayer. Although the Apostles' Creed was not yet introduced, the Athanasian Creed was to be said on a few great festivals, in the same part of the service where we now have it.

The service was to be performed in the choir, but in reading the lessons, the minister was to stand and turn so to be best heard by the people. By a rubric in the communion service the Litany was to be said on Wednesdays and Fridays, according to the form appointed by the King's injunctions, which directed, as we have seen, that the priest should say it in the body of the church kneeling at the head of the congregation, immediately before he began the communion service. It was the same as that already printed in the Primer, except that the invocation of the Virgin, and of the saints and angels, was now omitted.

In the communion service several important changes took place from that which had been set out the year before, as the whole of the office was now to be in English. It was entitled "The Supper of the Lord, and the Holy Communion, commonly called the Mass."

The rubrics preceding the service requiring the communicants to give in their names to the curate, and the curate to forbid notorious sinners, were almost the same as ours; to which was added a direction to the officiating priest to use the customary dress. The clerks were to begin by singing a psalm especially appointed for each Sunday and holiday, and printed before the collect for the day. This was called the Introit, because it was sung while the priest entered within the rails to begin the service: it was a very ancient custom, which was omitted in the second Liturgy, but has tacitly found its way back into our practice by the almost universal introduction before the communion of a congregational psalm or hymn. The priest began with the Lord's Prayer and collect, after which the commandments were not recited, but the *Gloria in excelsis*, which is now sung or said at the conclusion, was here inserted at the beginning, as in the primitive liturgies. The prayer for the King, and the collect, epistle and gospel for the day, were the same as now, except where a few of the collects, epistles, and gospels have been varied, and at the end of the gospel the people were to say, *Glory be to Thee, O Lord.* This was omitted in the second Liturgy, but it was inserted in that prepared for the Church of Scotland in the seventeenth century, and has since found its way back into our practice. After the Nicene Creed, the sermon or homily was to follow, as now; immediately after which, unless the people had been exhorted in the sermon itself to the worthy partaking of the sacrament, the exhortation was to be read, which we now have later in the service, "Dearly beloved in the Lord, ye that mind to come," in the end of which, instead of saying merely that Christ hath left us holy mysteries as pledges of his love, and for a continual remembrance of his death, it was expressed that "He hath left us in those holy mysteries, as a pledge of his love, and a continual remembrance of the same, his own blessed body and precious blood, for us to feed upon spiritually to our endless comfort and consola-

tion." Then came the Offertory, with the sentences to be sung or said while the people were offering their alms, after which those who were partakers of the holy communion were directed to remain in the choir, the men on the one side and the women on the other, and all the rest to depart out of the choir. The minister was now to prepare the bread and wine, mixing a little water with the wine, which was a most ancient practice, supposed to be in memory of the blood and water from our Saviour's side; after which came the angels' hymn, "Therefore, with angels and archangels," and the prayer "for the whole state of Christ's Church."

It will be observed that this prayer comes at an earlier part of our present service; but this is not the only alteration that was made respecting it in the second Prayer Book of King Edward. It is now entitled a prayer for the Church militant only, and not for the whole Church absolutely; and for this reason, that in the Liturgy as first compiled, it contained a commemoration of departed saints, and a prayer for their everlasting peace. After blessing God for the wonderful grace and virtue declared in his saints, and chiefly in the glorious and most blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of our Lord Jesus Christ, these words were added, "We commend unto thy mercy, oh Lord, all other thy servants, which are departed hence from us with the sign of faith, and now do rest in the sleep of peace; grant unto them, we beseech thee, thy mercy and everlasting peace; and that at the day of the general resurrection, we and all they which be of the mystical body of thy Son, may altogether be set on his right hand, and hear that his most joyful voice, Come unto me, oh ye that be blessed of my Father." The prayer of consecration followed, in which were these words, omitted in the second Liturgy, "With thy Holy Spirit vouchsafe to bless and sanctify these thy gifts and creatures of bread and wine, that they may be unto us the body and blood of thy most dearly beloved Son Jesus Christ;" which sentence, taken from the primitive liturgies, has lately

been restored to the communion service of the Church in the United States of America. After the consecration, the prayer of self-dedication followed, which was afterwards put in the post communion, "We offer and present unto thee ourselves, our souls and bodies." The confession was next to be said, as before appointed, either by the priest, or by one of the congregation, and then the absolution by the priest, the recitation of the "comfortable words of Christ, Come unto me," and the prayer, "We do not presume to come to this thy table, trusting in our own worthiness." During the delivery of the sacrament, the clerks were to sing, "Oh, Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world; have mercy upon us:" and in repeating it, "Grant us thy peace." Sentences of scripture were added, one of which was to be sung every day "after the holy communion, called the post communion;" and the service closed with a blessing, preceded by a prayer of thanksgiving for having been fed with the spiritual food of the most precious body and blood of our Saviour Christ[1].

It will be observed, that in this service, prayer for the dead was retained, though in such language as wholly to exclude the notion of purgatory. On the other hand, the presence of Christ in the eucharist was declared to be a spiritual presence, a statement which could not be reconciled with the Romish doctrine of transubstantiation. Another practice that was modified but not abandoned, is yet more important—confession to the minister, which in this, as in the service of the preceding year, was no longer enjoined as necessary,

---

[1] It was intended that there should be two communions on Easter Sunday and Christmas Day, for which occasions two collects, epistles, and gospels were provided, and soon after, when it was found that some private masses were still celebrated at St. Paul's, permission was given to have an early service for the communion, at any time when the people wished to attend it, instead of these private celebrations.

but yet was still permitted. For those, whose consciences might be troubled, were invited to come to the priest of the parish, or to any other, and open their grief secretly, that they might receive comfort and absolution; but with a caution to those who were satisfied with a general confession, not to condemn such as choose to confess privately, and to those in like manner not to judge the other. This caution was omitted in second Prayer Book, and absolution was mentioned in a more general way: but the invitation to confess to the priest was retained, and a special form of private absolution is also still to be found in the Visitation of the Sick, "for those who earnestly desire it," which form, in the first Prayer Book, was also directed to be used in all private confessions. It is further to be observed, that permission is given in both Liturgies to those who wish for this privilege, of choosing their own confessor; for the invitation says, "Let him come to me *or to some other minister*."

The greater part of this first reformed Liturgy[1] was compiled from the ancient services of the Church of England. The matins and evensong were little else than the ancient hymns and collects of the primitive Church, with the insertion of Scripture lessons and portions of the Psalms. The Litany was a translation of one previously in use, and the communion service was taken from the various liturgies then used in England, known respectively as Salisbury use, Lincoln use, and the like, as these were from still older forms which had come down from the first ages of the Church. But the commissioners were not unwilling to make use of other assistance; and though but few of the foreign divines, whose influence was so great in the second edition of the Prayer Book, had yet arrived in England, they are known to have consulted the book drawn up

---

[1] The word "Liturgy," however, *properly* applies only to the communion service.

with the advice of Melancthon and Bucer, at the instance of Herman, archbishop of Cologne, before mentioned, from the older Liturgy of Nuremberg, and published in his name with the title of *A Christian Reformation founded on God's Word.* Cranmer had corresponded with this prelate, and several of the occasional services were indebted to his book[1].

In the office for public baptism a form of exorcism was retained, as well as the putting on of the chrism or white robe in token of baptismal purity, and the child was to be dipped thrice in the font, unless too weak to bear it. The exorcism and the chrism were omitted in the second Liturgy, but the primitive doctrine of baptismal regeneration was carefully retained; and it is evident that this was not done without consideration, from the fact that the same doctrine was held by Cranmer in his book upon the Eucharist; not so as to imply that no future renewal is required, but that the seeds of grace are sown when the infant is transferred into the family of God. The catechism which we now call the Church catechism was placed at the end of the service for Confirmation, to be learned before the person was confirmed; but the questions and answers relating to the sacraments were added by Bishop Overal in the reign of James I. The marriage service was nearly the same as now, but in both prayer books it was enjoined that the married persons, "the same day of their marriage should receive the holy communion." The form of absolution in the Visitation of the Sick has been already mentioned. In addition to which the priest was permitted in the first book to administer extreme unction, if the sick person earnestly desired it; but this was omitted in the second[2]. For the communion of the sick, the consecrated elements were to be carried to the sick man's

---

[1] CARDWELL, *Two Liturgies*, Pref. p. xvi.

[2] The beautiful exhortation of the minister to the sick is repeated almost word for word by Ridley in his "Farewell" before his martyrdom. Possibly it may have been written by him.

house from the church, if it was on a day of public communion, but otherwise it might be consecrated at his house. But this also was omitted when the book was revised. Prayer for the dead was retained in the first burial service, and an office for the communion at funerals. Both were omitted in the second; the communion office for funerals was again separately sanctioned in the time of Queen Elizabeth, but not replaced in the Prayer Book. At the churching of women, the woman was to kneel, not as now in some private pew, but near the choir-door, or near the place where the holy table stood, and was to receive the holy communion if it was administered. The service for Ash-Wednesday has come down to us as then first compiled, attesting at once the solemn piety of the ancient Church, and the faithful diligence of our reformers. But it was intended by the introductory words to prepare the people's minds for the restoration of ancient discipline, which they hoped to effect by the reformation of the ecclesiastical laws.

This brief account of the first reformed Prayer Book, may serve to shew with what care and caution our English divines proceeded in their solemn task. We may say of this, as Edmund Burke says of our civil constitution, "All the reformations we have hitherto made have proceeded upon the principle of reference to antiquity; and let us hope and be persuaded, that all which may possibly be made hereafter will be carefully formed on precedent, authority, and example[1]."

---

[1] *On the French Revolution.*

CHAPTER XX.

FOREIGN REFORMERS INVITED INTO ENGLAND. CRANMER'S DESIGNS OF UNION. MARTIN BUCER AND PETER MARTYR. DISPUTE ABOUT THE HABITS. PROMOTION OF RIDLEY. POPULAR DISCONTENT.

> Pray'rs too are daughters of great Jove; but slow,
> Wrinkled with care, and sad of mien they go,
> Healing the gifts of mortals, where forlorn
> They pine from swift Revenge, his eldest born.
>
> HOMER. *Iliad*, ix.

IT had been a suggestion of thewise and moderate Melancthon, many years before, that a general confession of faith should be agreed upon by all the reformed. It was one of those healing measures by which this amiable man merited the character given him by Erasmus, that he followed Luther as the prayers personified in Homer follow after the goddess of Revenge[1]. The design was eagerly embraced, and long cherished by Cranmer. In the year 1538 a conference had been held in London upon the subject; at which several foreign divines were present; but it was broken up on the refusal of Henry to consent to other points, and particularly to the abolition of private masses; for he was a firm believer in purgatory, and had given Latimer a severe lecture for disputing the existence of such a place. The English divines and the foreigners had, however, agreed upon a statement of doctrine founded upon the Lutheran Confession of Augsburg; but in consequence of this rupture it was not published. On the accession of Edward, Cranmer renewed the attempt, and especially invited Melancthon himself to come over for this pur-

---

[1] See the motto of this chapter.

pose. The request was more than once renewed; Latimer spoke of it in his Court sermons; and it appears that Edward wrote in his own name to invite him only two months before his own early death, in May, 1553[1]. But he came not; and thus the meeting of the two men, who were perhaps the best qualified to unite the counsels of the reformers, was never realized. Instead of Melancthon, Cranmer secured the help of Martin Bucer, a German divine, born at Scleetstat, near Strasburg, and of Peter Martyr Vermiglio, a native of Florence.

Both these learned men had been originally members of monastic orders. Bucer having been left an orphan at a very early age, his grandfather induced him, when no more than fifteen, to become a Dominican friar; a common mode by which guardians of that period got rid of an inconvenient responsibility for their wards. The Dominicans sent Bucer to study at Heidelberg, where he was soon distinguished by his progress in philosophy and in the ancient languages. The labours of Erasmus in the revival of learning soon attracted his notice; and he began to study the writers of the Greek Church in the first ages. He was then invited to the court of the Elector Frederick; and in 1521, he first met with Luther at the Diet of Worms, where that bold man, in the presence of the Emperor and States of Germany, made his public defence of his writings. It was that famous occasion on which his friends had done their utmost to dissuade him from going, and Luther had replied, "If I were sure to be assailed by so many devils as there are tiles on the housetops of the town, I would still venture my life among them." Bucer had many conferences with Luther, and either then or before he became an associate of the reformers; but he never approved of the Lutheran doctrine of consubstantiation. After teaching with great repute in different places in Germany, he came,

[1] MELANCTHON, Epist. iv., 813.

in 1548, into England, and was made the king's professor of divinity at Cambridge. Here he was extremely acceptable to the English doctors and students, and greatly influenced the studies of the place. But he had scarcely completed the third year of his sojourn, when he died there. He was publicly buried in St. Mary's with every mark of honour; the gownsmen and citizens, to the number of three thousand persons, followed him to his grave, and the most eminent scholars employed their pens in orations, sermons, and poems to his memory.

Bucer had a strong sense of the desolate condition of the German reformed churches, and with his prayer that God would have mercy on his poor country, he used to join a petition that England might be preserved from the same errors. He saw that the three orders in the ministry were appointed in the beginning by the Holy Ghost; and he called it a device of Satan to destroy the order of bishops, that the churches might be given up to spoil. His error appears to have been, that he was too much inclined to alter everything that had been once abused, though he knew that it was not wrong in itself. Hence he persuaded Cranmer to remove from the communion service in the second Prayer Book, the primitive petition for the consecration of the bread and wine. Though his own belief about baptism was agreeable to that which has always been held in the Church, he wished to do away with those instructive forms and usages which the Church had long practised, and which he confessed to be more ancient than the errors which had been engrafted upon them. In some of these objections Cranmer listened to him, perhaps too far; but when he advised that godfathers should undertake only to see the child religiously brought up, without answering in his name, the archbishop did not comply[1].

[1] It may be well here to give Bucer's opinions on a practice which is now happily reviving, baptism in the presence of the

Peter Martyr was in his youth an Austin canon, and had been made prior of a convent near Lucca; but meeting with some writings of Zwingle the Swiss Reformer, he gave up his valuable preferment, and went into Switzerland. His doctrine became more like that of Calvin and the Geneva school, than that of the English reformers. When he was settled at Oxford, he was nearly as successful there as Bucer had been at Cambridge; and the celebrated Bishop Jewel, Nowell, Parkhurst, and many others, became his scholars and admirers. It cannot be said that his influence was altogether beneficial. He was a man of vehement spirit, without the subdued reverential temper of Bucer; he had not the same view of the dignity of the sacraments, nor a like regard to ecclesiastical order. As his friends were zealous for him and his opinions, so he also contrived to offend the opposite party by the warmth of his disputations, and they broke his windows, and assailed him with abuse. And he found too many imitators, of a class not yet quite out of date, who seem to think they are betraying truth, if they use any civility to those whom they believe to be in error. But with all this, the Florentine reformer was a man of learning and eloquence, and a diligent expositor of scripture. The beautiful address, in our present communion service, to be used when the people are negligent to come, was composed by him.

With Bucer there came to Cambridge Paul Fagius, or Buchlein, a Hebrew scholar, who, dying soon after

---

congregation. "It is very meet and right that those who are members of each other in Christ should be assembled, when any one born from among them, a child of wrath, is to be born again in the Church to everlasting life, and received among the children of God; that they may at once pray for that benefit, and the Church of Christ by its minister confer it; that as the child is made a member of each of them by this sacrament, so each may bind himself before God by a promise to show him all the offices of Christian fellowship, both ghostly and bodily."

his arrival, was succeeded by Emmanuel Tremellius as professor of that language. These men are not otherwise known than as promoters of the new learning, as the study of the most ancient tongues was at that time included under that title.

Another foreigner, of less learning, but of more activity, and turbulent zeal, was John Laski, commonly called A'Lasco, a man of a noble Polish family, but an exile from his country, who was received by Cranmer, and permitted to superintend a Dutch or German congregation in London. Melancthon draws his character, in a letter to a friend, as daring and self-opinionated; and he was one of those who made him despair of concord among the reformed party. Laski's opinions were what have since been called Calvinistic; but the reformation in Poland was early infected with Socinianism, and a spirit of self-will is too often the parent of heresy.

The effect of this influx of foreigners was nothing correspondent to the designs of Cranmer. Instead of promoting union with the churches abroad, it brought division into the counsels of the English reformers. John Hooper, an eminent preacher of the reformed doctrine, who with many others had passed some years abroad, during the persecution raised by the Six Articles, was appointed bishop of Gloucester. The dress of a bishop was not as now, of black satin mixed with lawn, but of scarlet silk, and this dress Hooper refused to wear, whereas the rubrics of the first Liturgy required that the bishops and clergy should retain precisely the same vestments that were in use before. It soon became not merely a question as to the propriety of such dresses, but as to the much more important point of the right of particular churches to make regulations in matters indifferent, which should be binding upon all their members[1]. In this point of view it was now

[1] CARDWELL, *Two Liturgies*, Pref. xix.

regarded by Cranmer, who refused to consecrate Hooper unless he would comply with the order in the Prayer Book. He persisted in his refusal, in which he was supported by the Earl of Warwick, and even by the young king himself. Cranmer referred the matter to Bucer and Peter Martyr, They both, as concerned their private opinions, wished the dresses discontinued, and it seems that Peter Martyr would not wear them himself at Oxford, but both agreed that under such circumstances they ought to be complied with. Bucer, especially, admitted that such garments had been used by the primitive fathers before popery, and thought "the retaining them might be expedient to show that the Church did not of any lightness change old customs." And Peter Martyr expressed his dissatisfaction at Hooper's perseverance; Ridley also attempted in vain to persuade him, and the attempt led to an estrangement of these two earnest and honest spirits; but their hearts were drawn together again when they were both afterwards involved in the same persecution. It was not till the next year that Hooper, finding himself blamed by those even who agreed with him in the main, consented to a compromise by which he undertook to wear the rochet on all public occasions, and was consecrated to his bishopric.

But a more congenial associate in Cranmer's labours, was now promoted to a prominent situation. The see of London had been kept vacant for half a year, after Bonner had been deprived for disobeying the orders of the council, and Ridley was then translated to it from Rochester, A.D. 1550. It is refreshing to dwell for a moment upon the conduct of this Christian bishop, amidst the conflict of selfish passions by which this period is darkened. A short time before, he had been sent down to Cambridge as a commissioner to execute some of those acts of spoliation which Somerset was too forward to promote; and not knowing the purport of his mission until his arrival, he then refused to coerce the masters and fellows of Clare Hall into a surrender of

their college. It was a serious matter in those days to resist the orders of those who exercised the authority of the king; but Ridley persevered, in spite of remonstrance, and that society, which exists at this day, owes its preservation to his honest resolution.

There is no reason to distrust the testimony of Fox, that after he became a bishop, "he so occupied himself in teaching and preaching, that a good child never was more loved by his dear parents, than he was by his flock and diocese. Every Sunday and holy-day he preached in some place or other, unless hindered by weighty business. The people resorted to his sermons swarming about him like bees, and coveting the sweet flowers and wholesome juice of the fruitful doctrine, which he not only preached, but showed the same by his life as a shining light, in such pure order, that even his very adversaries could not reprove him." With all his studies and public cares, he was still diligent in the religious instruction of his household, reading a lecture to them every day at their family prayer, and enticing them by gifts to learn parts of the New Testament by heart. Nor did he forget to cherish those who had suffered by his promotion; for it was his custom when at Fulham, to send for Bonner's mother and sister every day at dinner and place them beside him at his own table.

It is remarkable that Ridley, one of the most learned and most moderate among the reformers, should have set the example of directing the old stone altars to be taken down in churches, and "the Lord's Board, after the form of an honest table decently covered, to be set up in such place of the quire or chancel as shall be thought most meet by the discretion of the curates and the churchwardens." It appears that this had already been done in some places, and Ridley's injunctions were soon afterwards confirmed by a royal proclamation extending to all the churches in the kingdom. This was one of the greatest changes that had yet been made, especially as there is evidence that the Lord's supper

had been called a sacrifice, though not in the Romish sense, from very early times. But it was a favourite notion that Christian kings ought to imitate Josiah and Hezekiah in the abolition of unscriptural practices, and as Hezekiah broke in pieces the brazen serpent because it had been abused to idolatry, venerable as it was in itself as a record of a signal deliverance and a type of greater things to come, surely much more might the Reformers abolish the form of an altar when it had been abused to signify the daily repetition of the sacrifice of Christ. As usual, violent men were not satisfied on either side. Not content with the abolition of altars, many refused to kneel to receive the holy communion, and this became afterwards a fruitful source of contention, while others would desecrate the table to common purposes for fear of what they called superstition. But these evils have been gradually remedied. An injunction of Queen Elizabeth required that the tables should be set as we now have them, and decently covered, and a sense of propriety has confirmed the practice. So that it would surely be unthankful and undutiful now to attempt to alter it, without authority, and without general concurrence. But the chief opposition which this measure encountered at the time, was from the opposite party, and two of the bishops, Heath of Worcester, and Day of Chichester, were soon after deprived of their sees. Heath objected chiefly to the use of the new ordination service; but the ground of the deprivation of Bishop Day was that he would not concur in the order for the removal of altars. He was brought before the council, where Cranmer acknowledged that ancient writers sometimes call the table an altar, and he was told that he might so call it still[1]. But not being content with this, and refusing to comply, he was deprived. These were the only two bishops removed during this reign on merely ecclesiastical grounds. Both Bonner and Gardi-

[1] H. Wharton, *Harmer*, No. 38, p. 114, and No. 39, p. 116.

ner seem to have been willing to retain their bishoprics, and outwardly to comply with everything, as being the most effectual means of retaining the power to thwart the government in the changes that were going on. And although it had the appearance of injustice to remove those who gave an outward compliance, their conduct was calculated if not intended to drive the government to extreme courses. Bonner insulted the council when he was summoned before them, and his behaviour towards Cranmer may be illustrated from a trick he played him in order to bring him into contempt. On some occasion the archbishop was to hold a court in St. Paul's Cathedral, for which it was necessary that a temporary seat should be erected, as is still done on some great occasions. Bonner had it so contrived that the archbishop should sit, without knowing it, over one of the private altars, of which there were several in the church; and this circumstance he afterwards converted into an accusation against Cranmer, that he had seated himself above the altar of God, as if he had done it wilfully and in contempt. We shall see that Tonstal, who was also deprived towards the end of this reign, was merely the victim of political intrigue; and it is remarkable with what kindness and consideration the two bishops were treated who were now removed. The Bishop of Chichester was sent to reside with the Lord Chancellor, and Heath became the guest of Ridley at Fulham, where he remained till the accession of Queen Mary; and he acknowledged that he had been treated with the utmost kindness[1].

The state of religious excitement which had prevailed so long in Germany, had now communicated itself to this country, and the sect of Anabaptists were spreading opinions subversive of all religion. They did not merely hold what is now held by those who bear that name, that children ought not to be baptized, but many

[1] His words are reported to have been, that he was dealt with "more like a son than a subject."

of them denied the Divinity of Christ, and others indulged in wild speculations tending to the same point. The dread of these opinions, and the desire of showing that the Church of the Reformation did not sanction that which is truly called heresy, led to the deplorable execution of two persons, in this and the following year. Joan Bocher[1] had been condemned the year before by Cranmer, assisted by Latimer and others, for saying that Christ took no flesh of the substance of the Virgin his mother, an opinion, which if it have any sense in it, is equivalent to denying that our Redeemer partook of our human nature. As all the statutes against heresy had been repealed, those who might now be convicted could not be executed except by the king's writ, according to the common law of the land. It is not certainly known by what means the king's signature was obtained, or whether the council may have ventured to act for him in his minority. The story told by Foxe on this subject is wholly unsupported, and not consistent with other evidence[2]. What is certain is, that the execution was suspended for several months, and when at length it took place in May, 1550, Cranmer himself was not present when it was determined upon by the council. The next year, Van Parre, a Dutchman, being also convicted of affirming that Christ is not very God, was in like manner committed to the flames. These events have always been considered as a blot upon the character of the English Reformers. Certainly it is a subject of regret that the men of those times did not distinguish between the sinfulness of such doctrines, and the right to inflict such a penalty.

---

[1] Her name is by some written Bourchier, and by others Butcher.

[2] Strype remarks that, contrary to his usual custom, Foxe gives this story of his being persuaded by Cranmer, without quoting his authority; and that it is not noticed by Saunders, nor in King Edward's diary.

It might seem to a superficial observer, that the cause of our reformers was all this while in favour with the powers of the world. And yet it would in fact be a judgment much more near to the truth, that they had now as great difficulties as in the days of Henry[1]; or even greater, as the law had less power to protect them, and they had to reconstruct the Church when everything was tending to ruin. The irreligion, which was now unchecked, was the bitter fruit of former neglect and oppression. There was not a friend of the reformation who did not raise his voice against it. They preached of sacrilege and simony in the king's court; but the seats of the great offenders were left empty. The Philistines, said Bernard Gilpin, had stopped up the wells of faithful Abraham. The patrons of livings which had been under monasteries gave them to be farmed by their stewards and huntsmen; and hired for vicars those who would serve them cheapest. Others, who had pensions to pay to the dissolved monks, placed them in the parish-churches, to quit themselves of the burden. There was a famous Welch idol which Henry had burnt in Smithfield, called Darvol Gatheren, who had the power, as the people thought, of doing wonderful things for his worshippers. "I believe," said Gilpin, "that if Darvol Gatheren could come back and sign an agreement with a patron, to give him the best part of the profits, he might have a benefice." Bucer sympathised with Hooper against the dress of antichrist; "but," said he, "the sinews of antichrist are the church-robbers, that hold and spoil parish churches."

The poor were also great sufferers, while they were thrown out of the help of the old charities, and not yet provided for in their need by a poor-law. A great part of their misery, indeed, was owing to the change that was taking place in the state of society. A century before, the poor were serfs, bondmen of the soil, and

---

[1] Professor Jenkyns, Preface to Cranmer.

maintained by their respective owners. The transition from such a state to one of independence, would in any case have been attended with difficulty and hazard. And when it was so soon followed by the dissolution of those houses, which in every neighbourhood were sure to supply some aid towards their support, their suffering was doubtless much increased. This explains the meaning of an act of the preceding year, by which all sturdy beggars who should be convicted before a magistrate, should become the slaves of the person who should prosecute them to conviction: that is, they should return to the condition of serfs, which was still familiar to people's minds, and not yet wholly abolished. At the same time, an alteration took place in the mode of cultivating the soil which was highly disadvantageous to them. The great landowners used to let their land at easy rents to tenants who paid them partly in kind, partly in feudal service. These tenants lived in comfort from tillage, and were a contented and thriving race. But now the landlords were tempted by the high price of wool to turn arable land into pasture; and the enclosure of commons deprived cottagers of an old right, which even now is not everywhere extinct, derived from Saxon times. In a sermon of Latimer's, preached before the king in the year 1549, he told his Majesty that his own father was a farmer at Thurcaston in Leicestershire, where he paid a rent of £3 by the year and was able to bring up his children in comfort, and could always find a man and horse for the king's service: but that the man who now held the same land was paying £16 instead of £3 or £4, and was a beggar.

And this system was carried to the greatest extremes by the new proprietors of the abbey lands. Spending no money on the spot, and anxious only for profit, they had in general little regard for the tenants, and their avarice contrasted ill with the easy yoke of the monastic

---

[1] CARDWELL, *Two Liturgies*, Pref. xix.

proprietors. Many of the monks being put into the parish churches, would of course foment the popular discontent, and many more wandering and begging about the country, would be objects of compassion when they were no longer objects of envy. The Protector was willing enough to take the part of the commons against the oppressions of the nobility; and there are instances of his writing in a way that does him credit to those whom he knew to be guilty of oppression[1]. But his own hands were not clean from acts of spoliation, though he may not have been guilty of similar oppression. Fifty manors were alienated to him and his family by the dean and chapter of Westminster, in the hope to save themselves from a threat of dissolution, and he was beginning to build a palace for himself in the Strand, called Somerset House, on a scale of royal magnificence. Three bishops' houses and a church were pulled down to make room for it, and when the materials did not suffice, he attempted to demolish the church of St. Margaret's at Westminster, giving the abbey church to the parish instead. But the parishioners resisted, and drove away the workpeople by force. So he took down a cloister and two chapels at St. Paul's Cathedral, and when that was not enough he ordered the finest church in London except St. Paul's, that of the Knights of St. John, which King Henry had spared, to be blown up with gunpowder and converted to his use.

The oppressions referred to led to several risings and rebellions; one in Devonshire and Cornwall, and a more alarming one in Norfolk and the eastern counties. The Devonshire rebels were taught by some priests to demand restitution of the abbey and chantry lands to pious uses, the revival of solitary masses, and that the communion

[1] See a letter published by Mr. Tytler, from the Protector to Lord Cobham, on behalf of a poor woman whom that nobleman had oppressed.

should be administered to the people only at Easter, as it had been before; images to be restored, old customs to be brought back, and the Bible and English service to be put down. It is to be observed that the Cornish men at this period spoke a language near akin to the Welsh, and few understood English. But Cranmer, who put out an answer to this manifesto, rightly judged that it was the work of a few cunning heads, by whom the peasantry were misguided. These troubles were put down with the slaughter of some thousands of the people; and Lord Russell, who commanded, hung the priests, in bitter vengeance, on their own church-towers. Kett, a tanner, who led the Norfolk men, professed no attachment to anything of older time, but was a reformer of Wat Tyler's kind, meaning to destroy the gentry, who had given the poor too much reason to regard them as enemies. It is said that the disorders were quelled chiefly by the aid of foreign troops, who were employed because the nobles could not trust the disposition of the people. The rising in Devonshire led to an order in council to take down all the bells save one out of every steeple, because they had been used to summon the people together for rebellious purposes; and contractors were readily found to turn bells and clappers into a means of profit. Altogether, it was too evident that, in the English Reformation, also, the fiery speed of revenge for the sins of former generations had far outstripped the healing progress of the Prayers.

CHAPTER XXI.

FALL OF SOMERSET. CRANMER'S OPINIONS ON THE EUCHARIST. SECOND REFORMED LITURGY. ARTICLES. REFORMATIO LEGUM. DEATH OF EDWARD VI. COUNCIL OF TRENT.

> What custom wills, in all things should we do,
> The dust on antique time would lie unswept,
> And mountainous error be too highly heaped
> For truth to over-peer.—SHAKSPEARE.

INDEED the state of England during the reign of Edward was languishing and distracted. The prince's minority had left the sovereign power as a prize for competition amongst the nobles; and the people, as we have seen, were distressed and easily disposed to rebel. The Protector Somerset found his first enemy to be his own brother, Thomas Seymour, the lord admiral; and a bill of attainder was brought against him. He was accused of having hired German troops to aid him in a design to seize the person of the king, to displace his brother, and gain the power into his own hands. It is certain that he was a vicious man, dangerous, and turbulent; and his proceedings may have been treasonable: but it was a miserable spectacle, when the country saw a brother condemned to the traitor's axe by the influence of a brother. In setting his hand to the death-warrant, Cranmer was guilty of a strange departure from the practice of an English bishop, whom the laws of the Church and of the country, alike forbade to meddle with causes of blood. His justification was, that he acted as one of the council of regency, exercising the royal authority. Latimer, in a sermon, justified the extremity that was used towards the admiral, because

he had in his last moments prepared two secret letters, to be delivered to the two princesses, Mary and Elizabeth, to caution them against the designs of the Protector. If he died in malice against his brother, the more unfit he was to die. It is only lamentable that Cranmer should have consented to the act, and that honest Latimer should have used such reasons to defend it.

The root of a power watered with kindred blood is seldom found to flourish long. There was one of the most ready agents in the attainder of the admiral, who within six months had compassed the overthrow of Somerset himself. The rise of Dudley, earl of Warwick, and the ruin of the Protector, are matters of history. There is no faith in courts, when ambition governs, and avarice suggests to every man the path of personal advancement. Paget, the confidential friend of Somerset, was the instrument of his betrayal, and sent a message from Windsor to tell the associated nobles how he might best be apprehended[1]. He prolonged his life by submission; but it was impossible to avoid suspicion; and it seems that he could not brook the loss of his authority.

With regard to the government of Dudley, or Northumberland, the title which he procured himself after the fall of Somerset, it was altogether guided by a selfish desire of aggrandisement. With what crimes he gained his dangerous elevation, with what dark and desperate counsels he tried to bring the crown into the line of his own family, is all recorded in the public annals of this period. It was natural enough that he should have been suspected of hastening the young king's death, when he had so laid his designs for his own more absolute power. Our plan only requires us to notice those circumstances which concern the state of religion among the people.

It was now that the young king's religious education

[1] Sir H. Ellis, vol. ii. p. 173.

was of essential service in the maintenance of the reformed religion. Northumberland was a man merely devoted, as we have said, to his own ambition, but his inclination was towards what was called the old religion. He seems to have brought over Wriothesley, earl of Southampton, to his party, by promising to impede the reformation, and Gardiner, who had been imprisoned with Bonner for disobedience to the council, wrote to him from the Tower, congratulating the change of ministers, and hoping for release. There was a general expectation among those who wished to restore the Latin service and the private mass, that their wishes would be gratified, and they began to desist from attending the new service. Bonner, also, who had been sentenced the year before to be deprived of his bishopric of London, prayed that the sentence might be reversed, and an appeal entertained which he had entered against it. But Edward showed himself so entirely resolved to proceed in the same course, that Northumberland made no attempt to alter his resolution, but professed to go along with all his wishes. A proclamation was issued for calling in all missals, and other books of the old devotion, which were to be delivered to visitors appointed for the purpose, and this was confirmed by the parliament, which met in January, 1550, by which also a new form for an ordination service, which had been drawn up by the commissioners, was ordered to be used. This service gave more offence to the Romish party than the English Liturgy, and their hostility was much increased by the orders which soon followed for taking down the stone altars in churches, as has been already related.

It was in the year 1550 that Cranmer published his *Defence of the True and Catholic Doctrine of the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of our Saviour Christ;* and no book had so great an influence as this upon the belief of the English Church. There had been considerable difference of opinion among the reformers respecting the manner of our Saviour's Presence in the

Holy Eucharist. They agreed in rejecting the Romish doctrine; but Luther and his followers maintained what was called a Corporeal Presence, asserting that, although the bread and wine do not cease to be bread and wine, yet the Real body of Christ is in some ineffable way associated into their substance; and this is what is called Consubstantiation. But the Swiss divines, of whom Zwingle was the leader, rejecting the corporeal presence altogether, were themselves divided into two parties, the one holding that there is a spiritual presence, with a participation of the benefits of Christ's death, while the rest went the length of denying that this holy sacrament is anything else than a bare commemoration. Attempts had been made to arrive at an agreement between them, and there is a remarkable paper sent from Luther to Bucer some time before, discussing the possibility of a reconciliation by a mutual concession, by which the Lutherans should acknowledge that it is only bread, and the Zwinglians should concede that Christ is really present; and it had been agreed by Frith and Tyndal, that they should abstain as much as possible from agitating the question. But the foreign divines who were invited over in the beginning of this reign, were generally opposed to the Lutheran notions, and the year before the publication of Cranmer's book there had been disputations held with the Romish party, both at Oxford and at Cambridge. Peter Martyr undertook to maintain that there is no Transubstantiation; that the Body and Blood of Christ is not carnally or corporeally present in the sacrament, (which was Luther's doctrine,) and that they are united to the bread and wine sacramentally. And it is a circumstance well worthy of remark, so short a time before the doctrine of Transubstantiation was finally established by the Council of Trent, that several of their own divines were then prepared to abandon it. One of those who took part in the debate against Peter Martyr was Bernard Gilpin, who being then a young man, had not yet made up his mind to abandon what he found

received as the doctrine of the Church. He is said to have publicly owned, that he could not maintain the cause he had undertaken, and being dissatisfied upon the subject, he went to Bishop Tonstal, who was his near relation, and to others of that party, for their opinion. The answers he obtained were afterwards related by himself. Tonstal told him, that "Innocent III. was much overseen, to make transubstantiation an article of faith," which opinion this learned and moderate bishop soon afterwards publicly maintained in a book he wrote upon the sacrament. Another told him the Communion Book, as then put out, was very godly, and agreeable to the Gospel; and he was told, that Dr. Chedsey, one of the leading opponets of Peter Martyr in this disputation, had said among his friends, "the Protestants must yield to us in granting the presence of Christ in the sacrament, and we must yield to them in the opinion of transubstantiation," the very thing which the Church of England has done.

It was generally supposed that Cranmer held the Lutheran opinion of the sacrament, for some time previous to his final adoption of those sentiments which he now put forth in his book[1]. He had made copious selections from the fathers, and had gone through the whole subject, with his usual accuracy, before the time of the trial of Frith, at which time his opinion, at all events, of the Corporeal Presence, remained unshaken. But when Ridley had been convinced by the writings of Bertram, that such had not been the doctrine of the earlier Church, the archbishop was induced by his opinion to go over the whole subject again, the result of which was the conviction that such notions are a novelty, equally inconsistent with Holy Scripture and with the teaching of the early Church. Thus deliberately and gradually did he arrive at that conclusion which he finally embraced. His mode of stating the

[1] See the reasons for adhering to this opinion fully stated by Mr. Jenkyns, in his Preface to his Edition of Cranmer's works, p. 74.

doctrine appears to have agreed with the more moderate of the Swiss divines, that it is a Spiritual Presence, which he expressed in these words, "that the cup is a communion of Christ's blood that was shed for us, and the bread is a communion of his flesh that was crucified for us; so that although in the truth of his human nature, Christ be in heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father, yet whosoever eateth of that bread in the Supper of the Lord, according to Christ's institution and ordinance, is assured of Christ's own promise and testament, that he is a member of his body, and receiveth the benefits of his passion which he suffered for us on the cross." And he declared that he was equally anxious to guard against the error of those who went to the extreme of "despising this blessed sacrament as a thing of small or of none effect," as he was to do away with "the abuse of it to other purposes than Christ did first ordain." It may be doubted whether he did not define too far, and whether it be not preferable to confine ourselves to our Lord's words, with the explanation that we take them spiritually. But we are not bound by the opinions even of Cranmer, and happily this moderate course, though not immediately followed, has since been adopted by our church. In the forty-two Articles drawn up by him, and published in the end of this reign "the Real Presence" was expressly denied, though in such a way as to limit the meaning to a Corporeal Presence, and in the Liturgy, as then revised, the words before directed to be used at the delivery of the sacrament, "The Body and Blood of Christ, preserve thy body and soul," were altogether omitted; instead of which these words only were to be said, "Take and eat this in remembrance that Christ died for thee," as if it were only a memorial. But the clause in the article denying the real presence was omitted on the accession of Queen Elizabeth, and the words originally used in delivering the sacrament were united with those subsequently introduced. In the addition to the Catechism also it was

expressly declared that "the Body and Blood of Christ are verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful in the Lord's Supper." So that provided we acknowledge, that it is after a spiritual manner, we are at liberty to affirm, and many of the best learned men of our Church have constantly affirmed, that there is a Real Presence of Christ in the Holy Eucharist[1].

[1] This term "Real Presence" is claimed by Romanists as expressing their doctrine, and it was so used by many of the Reformers, and by Cranmer himself. It seems clear, however, that Frith and Bucer were willing to retain that expression, as many have since been, who have been as far as possible from holding Transubstantiation, or any other notion of a Carnal or Corporeal Presence. A learned modern writer indeed has said, that the Reformers ought to have learned, "by exposing the absurdities of transubstantiation, not to contend for equal nonsense of their own;" and the same author having described the Zwinglian notion, that there is nothing in the sacrament but a sign or symbol, to which he justly says, the three opinions of the Romanists, the Lutherans, and of those who held a real presence without any change of substance, were equally opposed, calls this last opinion "a jargon of bad metaphysical theology," and says that, "as the Romish tenet of transubstantiation is the best, so this of the Calvinists is the worst imagined of the three that have been opposed to the simplicity of the Helvetic explanation." It is very useful for Churchmen to be aware of the way in which men of the world regard those questions which seem to them of the greatest importance; so that we may take Mr. Hallam's strictures in good part. But does he mean to say, that the doctrine of transubstantiation is one of little importance? And when men saw with their own eyes the consequences of that doctrine, and become convinced that the theory was groundless on which it depended, and were persecuted to the death if they denied the doctrine; what else could they do than endeavour to state what was the true doctrine? That they persecuted one another for their opinions on this point is not true; that they would differ might naturally be expected, and that many would rush to an opposite extreme, and not be content to state without defining it. But when we are told that this doctrine of a Real without a Corporeal Presence is a jargon of bad metaphysics, perhaps such statements may arise from not having considered that those who say so, *do not profess to explain the matter, but to adopt the language of scripture without explanation.* It is not *impossible* that Christ should,

The general feeling of the reforming party was now pressing for further alterations. The new liturgy, excellent and beautiful as it was, had failed to satisfy almost any class of opinions. The advocates of the old learning were opposed to any sort of change, and many of the Reformers were unwilling to retain anything that the Church of Rome had held. Calvin had written to Somerset when it first came out, approving it as far as it went, but hoping for further change, and all the foreigners who were in England concurred in the same wish, and were backed by a strong party at home. The change in Cranmer's views on the eucharist would incline him to some alteration; and the long cherished hope of uniting all the reformed churches at home and abroad in one confession of faith, when it was proposed

---

after some spiritual manner, "give us his flesh to eat," and we believe it because of his word, only we determine that it is not a corporeal or bodily presence of his flesh, and we define no further. This is perhaps best illustrated by the well-known language of Bishop Ken. "Oh, God incarnate! how thou canst give us thy flesh to eat, and thy blood to drink; how thy flesh is meat indeed! how thou who art in heaven art present on our altar, I can by no means explain; but I firmly believe it all, because thou hast said it; and I firmly rely on thy love, and on thy omnipotence to make good thy word, though the manner of doing it I cannot comprehend." But if any think this mode of expression too strong, the Church, though it admits, does not impose it, provided we keep clear of the two extremes of denying, on the one hand, that in this sacrament the faithful are partakers of Christ, on the other of affirming that it is a gross and carnal partaking of Him. It is thus expressed by a modern divine: "When we recollect what there is in the Lord's Supper beyond the mere meeting of Christ and his disciples; what it is which the bread and the wine commemorate; of what we partake when, as true Christians, we eat of that bread and drink of that cup; then we shall understand that God indeed is brought very near to us, inasmuch as he who is a Christian, and partakes sincerely of Christian communion, is a partaker also of Christ; and as belonging to his body, his living spiritual body, the universal Church, receives his share of all those blessings, of all that infinite love which the Father shows continually to the head of that body, his own well-beloved Son." —ARNOLD's *Christian Life*, Serm. xxii. p. 242.

that those on the continent should receive episcopal government from England, the loss of which both Luther and Calvin had lamented, made it seem desirable to approximate towards their views. The king also was bent upon "a further Reformation," in which he was confirmed by a paper upon the subject presented to him about this time by Bucer; and not long after the commissioners had completed the new ordination services, they were directed to proceed to a revision of the Prayer Book, some questions connected with which subject had already been moved in convocation. However willing the foreign divines may have been to give their assistance, it does not appear that their suggestions were implicitly followed, and there is reason to believe, on the contrary, that what was done was, for the most part, the work of the commissioners themselves[1]. The alterations made by them in the communion service have been already noticed, except that the practice of reading the Ten Commandments at the beginning of that service, was now first introduced. The earlier liturgies had begun with more of joy than of humiliation and sorrow, but it has been remarked as appropriate to the condition of a repentant and returning Church that we should for awhile stand afar off and bethink us of our sins and our duties, before we draw nigh to the most sacred and glorious mysteries. And the same observation applies to the beautiful introduction to the morning prayer, which also was now first added, consisting of the sentences of Scripture, the Exhortation, Confession, and Absolution[2]. These are not to be found in this place in the primitive liturgies, and the idea seems to have been taken from the Liturgy of Calvin, and from one then used in England by John Laski in his German congregation. But Calvin had no absolution in his service, having been over-ruled in his own wish to in-

[1] CARDWELL, *Pref.* p. xxv.

[2] This part was not added to the service for *evening* prayer, until the Restoration.

troduce it; nor did they copy that of Laski, but seem rather to have availed themselves of the numerous forms for that purpose with which they were already familiar, in the ancient services of their own Church. It was now required that prayers should be said every day by all clergymen in their churches, and that all persons should receive the holy communion three times a year at least, instead of once only as in the first book, this being a suggestion which had been made by Bucer. An important alteration was also made in the rubric respecting clerical vestments, by which, instead of continuing the use of such dresses as were in the Roman Catholic churches, a simple surplice, with the hood, was all that was required. The omission of Prayer for the Dead, both in the communion and burial services, has been already mentioned, a practice which has been silently discontinued by the English Church. These alterations were drawn up in the year 1551, but as the parliament did not meet till the next year, the law for the use of the Prayer Book thus revised was not made until April, 1552, and the observance of it was to begin from the feast of All Saints following. It may be mentioned here that the prayers for the Parliament and for all Conditions of Men, and the General Thanksgiving, were not added until the restoration of Charles II., after the great Rebellion. A slight alteration was now made as to the holidays to be observed in this church, by omitting the festivals of St. Mary Magdalen, and St. Clement of Rome; and the observance of the rest was soon afterwards enjoined by act of parliament[1].

Cranmer was soon engaged in controversy in consequence of his book on the eucharist. It was answered by Gardiner, who thought fit to exhibit his answer before the council when he was called up for judgment in the causes alleged against him, as if he had been questioned for his doctrine on that point. On this

[1] 5 and 6 Edw. VI. c. 3.

occasion he called his judges "heretics and sacramentaries," and was at length deprived of his bishopric in February, 1551. Cranmer produced a reply to Gardiner's answer in the September following, in which he gave the whole of his adversary's arguments at length, and answered them in order. He had greatly the advantage of Gardiner both in his knowledge of the fathers, and in solid reasoning, and these books of his have hardly been surpassed for the ability and research with which they state the question.

But the archbishop had other work upon his hands at this time in the preparation of the Articles of the English Church. It was not until the year 1552 that it became apparent that the design of a general confession of faith for all the reformed churches was hopeless, and then the archbishop proceeded, with other divines, under a royal commission, to draw up forty-two Articles of Faith, founded upon those which had been agreed upon with the German divines in 1538, as these were in great measure upon the Confession of Augsburg[1]. They were published by royal authority in 1553, as having been agreed upon in a London synod in the year 1552, but whether this meant the convocation itself, or the assembly of bishops and divines by whom they were drawn up, has not been certainly determined. They did not differ essentially from the thirty-nine Articles of Elizabeth, which to this day form the Confession of Faith of the English Church. The "real or corporeal presence" in the eucharist was denied, on the ground of its being impossible that the body of Christ should be in many places at once. There was no article on the Holy Ghost, but there were four more at the end, which were omitted at the revision under Elizabeth, on the following points: That the resurrection of the dead is not passed already. That the souls of men departed do not perish with their bodies, or sleep till the day of judgment. That

[1] Jenkyns, *Pref.* pp. xxii. and cvi.

the notion of the millennium is a fable derived from Jewish traditions, and against the sense of scripture. That it is a grievous error to teach that all men, however they may live, shall be saved at last. The first of these four had reference to some doctrine denying the future resurrection of the body, and confining the power of Christ to a spiritual reviving of the soul. The others were pointed against some opinions which have found supporters in these times; and it may be well to remember what such men as Cranmer and Ridley thought of them.

One thing was wanting to complete the design of a reformation, by putting forth a new code of ecclesiastical law. The clergy having agreed in their submission to Henry VIII., that they would cease to claim an exclusive right of legislation, the laws respecting ecclesiastical matters were left as they existed before the Reformation; but it had been intended from the first that they should be revised, and a law had been passed to authorise the king during his life to appoint commissioners for that purpose, and what he should so put forth was to have the force of law. A body of canons was prepared for that purpose in 1544, but they never received the king's signature; and as this act was limited to his life, a similar power was granted to his son, in the beginning of his reign. Thirty-two commissioners were named under this act, in 1551, consisting of eight bishops, eight divines, eight civilians, and eight common lawyers, but it was chiefly carried on by Cranmer, assisted by Taylor, soon afterwards bishop of Lincoln, Peter Martyr, and Walter Haddon, a civilian, President of Magdalen College, Oxford. Their work was finished and ready for the king's signature, which was prevented by his death, and the want of such a code has ever since been, to human judgment, the great misfortune of this Church[1].

[1] This code is usually known as the "Reformatio Legum Ecclesiasticarum."

Having enumerated the chief heads of Christian belief, and the principal heresies, they proceeded to the punishment of heresy. The offender was first to be excommunicated, and if he continued obstinate was to be delivered to the secular power; upon which, as the common law of the land then stood, he might have been consigned to the flames. But in the last draft of these canons the following limitation was added; having been delivered to the secular power, he was to be either condemned to perpetual banishment or imprisonment, or punished in such other way as should seem most conducive to his conversion: so that it would seem that at least their desire was to abolish the penalty of death for heresy. As regards clerical duties, preachers were to be appointed in each district, under the bishop's authority, who should go round to the several parishes to preach in turn; pluralities were to be wholly abolished; prebendaries in residence were to expound the scriptures thrice a week in the cathedral; rural deans were to be annually appointed to superintend the clergy and laity of each deanery, and report to the bishop every six months, the archdeacon being as it were the head over the rural deans; diocesan synods were to be held every year in Lent, at which, after the litany, followed by a sermon and the holy communion, the clergy were to retire with the bishop and report the state of the diocese to him, upon which he was to give his orders, which were to be obeyed at once. Bishops in their old age or infirm were to have a coadjutor bishop, subject only to appeal to the archbishop; visitations were to be held besides the Diocesan synods; each bishop was to bring up young men in his family for the ministry, and his wife and children were to avoid all levity and vain dress; each archbishop was to visit his whole province once, and on great occasions, with the king's licence, was to hold provincial synods. As regards correction of morals, seducers were to be excommunicated if they would not marry those whom they had seduced, or if

this should be impossible, they were to give them a third part of their whole property. An adulterer, if a clergyman, was to forfeit all his property, be deprived of his benefice and banished or imprisoned for life; if a layman, he was to restore his wife's portion, give her half his goods, and suffer the like banishment or imprisonment; and the punishment of women was similar. Divorce might be had on sufficient grounds, but there was to be no "separation" without divorce. In cases of notorious scandal, persons might be called upon to clear themselves upon oath before the bishop, with four compurgators who should swear they believed the accused spoke the truth. The form of excommunication, and of that for receiving penitents back to the Church, were exceedingly beautiful; but the mention of these will occur in some canons which were drawn up under Queen Elizabeth.

One other thing provided for in these laws was of such importance as to deserve separate notice. It was required that on every holiday, the curate or minister of each parish should catechise the children for an hour in the afternoon. And this was in accordance with several injunctions in this reign, as well as with the frequent publication of forms of catechetical instruction. The rubric at the end of the catechism annexed to the confirmation service in both the prayer books of King Edward, required that the curate, that is the clergyman of the parish, should *once in six weeks at least* instruct and examine the children for half an hour before evensong. It was not said that the people should be taught to read, which was a privilege as yet possessed by few; but it was required that the clergy themselves should instruct the youth of their parish in the elements of Christian doctrine, and should admit none to the holy communion who were not so instructed. Similar orders and still more express were given under Queen Elizabeth; for it was then, as it is still, required to be done every Sunday after the second lesson; by which means the elder

people might witness the instruction of their children and servants, and profit by it themselves. Nor can it be expected that any Church should possess the affections of the people, or succeed in training them in Christian courses where this shall be neglected[1].

Amidst these important changes, the turbulent ambition of the courtiers was bringing disastrous results upon themselves and their country. Somerset had prolonged his life by submission; but it was impossible to avoid suspicion, and his imprudence gave advantage to his enemies. It has been supposed that the king was prejudiced against him by his brother[2]; and he is known to have once expressed himself as if he had thought the removal of his uncle would be an advantage. But the truth seems to be that from his youth and state of pupilage he had no choice in the matter. The death of Somerset is recorded in his journal without a word of affection or regret; and if this marks anything, it is the ascendancy which Dudley had now gained over him. It is indeed evident, from the king's journal and other records, that he was at the time engaged in a round of amusements, court masques and tilting-matches, and it is probable that it was so contrived by Dudley, to keep him from reflection. The execution of the late Protector took place on Tower Hill in January, 1552, and his speeeh and conduct on the scaffold tended to confirm the impression that, however vainglorious and unguarded, he was not without a sincere desire to act on Christian principles. It was much noted at the time that he had obtained a grant of the demesne of Glastonbury Abbey, and had converted the remains of its noble buildings into a manufactory

[1] The canons of James I., which are now in force, say that the catechetical instruction shall be given before the service in the afternoon. But as they are not sanctioned by parliament, the rubric which directs that it shall be after the second lesson, is not repeated by them, though probably it may be considered optional.

[2] By Mr. Tytler. *England under the Reigns of Edward VI. and Mary.*

of woollen[1]. And as one of the popes had formerly entailed an especial curse upon any one who should desecrate that venerable foundation, his miscarriages were thought to be a signal instance of the divine displeasure upon sacrilege. But the country was no gainer in this respect by the government of his rival.

Warwick had got himself made Duke of Northumberland, and, that he might have a principality to support his dukedom, not content with the domains of the Percies, he now endeavoured to deprive Tonstal, bishop of Durham, that he might get the palatinate to himself. Some letters were found which were construed to implicate the bishop in Somerset's affair, and he was attainted of misprision of treason. But Cranmer vehemently opposed the bill, and with Lord Stourton, protested against it, and the commons threw it out. Notwithstanding which Tonstal was deprived a year afterwards, and an act passed to divide the bishopric, erecting another for the county of Northumberland, and leaving the palatine jurisdiction to the king, who bestowed it upon this duke, who obtained no less than twelve grants of lands from the crown during this short reign, the first being the castle of Warwick, and the last the palatinate of Durham. But this treatment of Bishop Tonstal was equally unjust towards him and unfavourable to the cause of the reformation. He had not refused to comply with any of the changes that had taken place, and was the personal friend of Cranmer and Somerset. Cranmer declared afterwards that Northumberland had for some time laboured to accomplish his own ruin also, and the deprivation of Tonstal was merely a political act; but it placed him in the position of one of the deprived bishops, and probably precluded his acquiescence in the restoration of the reformed religion under Queen Elizabeth. Ridley had been

1 See p. 337. But yet there was something good even in this scheme, for it was made an asylum for French refugees, who had their chaplain there.

actually promoted to the see of Durham[1], when all these matters were stopped by the king's death. It was also during the latter years of this reign that the greater part of that scandalous impoverishment of the bishops' sees was carried on. Cranmer was forced to surrender Knowle Park in Kent; Beaudesert had been already taken from the bishopric of Litchfield. The new bishoprics of Gloucester and Westminster were suppressed and most of their land seized. When Gardiner was deprived, which was not till after Somerset had been deposed from the Protectorate, two thousand marks a year was all that was allowed to his successor Bishop Poynet; and when Miles Coverdale, the associate of Tyndal in translating parts of the Bible, was promoted to the see of Exeter, almost the whole of the lands had been conveyed away. It was usual to give impropriate tithes to the bishops instead of their lands, thus placing them in a false position, as if they were withholding the tithes which ought to have been restored to the parishes when the monasteries were suppressed. This had been done when Holbech was made bishop of Lincoln[2]; but Veysey, the bishop of Exeter, did not get even so much as this, and had nothing to leave to his successor but the record of promises which were never fulfilled. Latimer had been pressed to return to his bishopric of Worcester, and the house of commons had done him the well-deserved honour of petitioning that he might have it.

---

[1] There is no doubt that H. Wharton is right in saying that Ridley had been translated to Durham, though possibly he might not yet have taken possession, as he signed himself bishop of London, as Strype has shewn, on the last day of King Edward's life. But not only does the register of the Council in Queen Mary's reign declare him to have been deprived of the see of Durham, and not of London; but he himself mentions the fact in his letters to his family, printed by Coverdale among the Martyr's letters, immediately before his death.

[2] It is said that the spire of the great tower of Lincoln Minster fell down the day after the manors of the see had been surrendered.

But he distinctly refused; and it is most probable that one reason which weighed with him was that he would not be a party to that alienation of the lands of his see which was exacted of almost every new bishop in these times. Latimer frequently and boldly protested against this prevailing covetousness in his sermons at Court, and did not scruple to call upon the possessors of ill-gotten wealth to make restitution, and that so persuasively, that he was once or twice successful. At another time he mentioned a case of injustice which had come to his knowledge, adding that the man who had done it was present, though he might have thought he had done it secretly. Such a preacher was not the sort of person who was likely to be accessory, even though a passive agent, to the spoliation he condemned. But it had become a convenient doctrine that it was good for religion that the clergy should be poor.

The condition of the parochial clergy, at the same time, was as bad or worse. Many of them exercised common trades for their own support, or kept houses of public entertainment; not that such practices were new, for similar instances may be found in the preceding reigns. But it shews that very little improvement had yet taken place, though many attempts were made to remedy the deficiency. If now preaching was rare, a little while before there many churches in which there was not even a pulpit. And wherever a zealous man could be found, favourable to the reformation, he was licensed to preach, not only in his own church, but in a certain district, and the king's chaplains especially were so employed, among whom were Grindal, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury, whom Ridley had the merit of first bringing into notice, and John Knox, the too impetuous reformer of Scotland. Indeed, it would appear from the intended reformation of ecclesiastical laws, that a modified system of itinerancy, in the place of that which had been introduced by the friars, and carried on in spite of them by the

poor priests of Wycliffe, was designed by the Church of the Reformation. It is to be remembered also, that great as were the evils which the above causes had tended to cherish, the fault was not with those who were concerned in carrying on the Reformation itself. Many were the instances of a self-denying and apostolical spirit by which the reforming clergy commended their doctrine to the hearts of the people in every part of the country. Hooper, at his bishopric of Gloucester, went about the towns and villages of his diocese, teaching and preaching to the people, so that "no father in his household, no husbandman in his vineyard, was more employed than he." Every day he entertained the poor at dinner in his hall, and himself and his chaplains instructed them in religion, and dined after them upon the same fare. Dr. Rowland Taylor, at Hadley in Suffolk, by his assiduous labours, brought over a manufacturing population, not to his own opinions only, but to that sincere religion which is proved by an altered life and conversation. And Bernard Gilpin, having been presented by the Crown to the vicarage of Norton, in Durham, in 1552, had already entered upon those labours which afterwards gained him the appellation of the *Apostle of the North*. A general license to preach was granted him in consequence of the sermon above referred to; for it was an excellent practice that was then observed, that every man who had a Crown living given him should preach once before the king.

Indeed, nothing is more remarkable in the history of these times than the number of true-hearted and devoted men whom the primate was enabled to rally round him. Of all those who were preferred by his advice, or who shared his labours, there was scarcely one who in the day of trial was found wanting. Let a few more instances be taken of the most eminent.

Nicholas Ridley must always be named as the first of his associates, as the one to whom we especially owe the revival of the true doctrine of the Lord's supper, and from whom Cranmer himself gratefully acknowledged

that he had received it[1]. The part which he took we have already seen, from the time of his early studies at Cambridge. He was of an old family in Northumberland; and, educated under the care of an uncle of eminent learning in the canon law, his early prejudices were by no means favourable to the cause of reformation. But the study of the Scriptures in the original tongue, and the acquaintance he made with the works of the fathers, set him upon inquiries which the canonists could not satisfy; and though his uncle sent him to Paris and Louvain, he returned to Cambridge more confirmed in his desires after the truth as it was taught in more primitive times. He was then for some time employed in teaching at the University, where he gained the affection of his pupils, as one of them testifies[2], by piety without hypocrisy or austerity, and an obliging familiarity, often condescending to join in their amusements at tennis or archery, while he took care to imbue them with hard Greek.

Latimer has been already frequently before the reader. He does not appear to have been one who had any hand in the consultations at Windsor or elsewhere. His ready popular talent at preaching was his chief service. His sermons, though we have them only as they were taken down by his hearers, and therefore necessarily conveying an imperfect notion of what he was, will always be among the most pleasing memorials of the time: they breathe the spirit of a plain Christian sincerity, delivering its message to all ranks and parties without fear or favour, and with a strong vein of native humour and good sense, which wins its way, as it did at first, to every English heart. His mind and memory seem to have been somewhat impaired before his last conflict;

---

[1] It is probable that Ridley acquiesced with Bucer in wishing to omit the petition for consecrating the elements, because he thought St. Dionysius and St. Basil directed that part to be "spoken in silence."—Answers on the Mass, Q. 9.

[2] Turner, dean of Wells, in Strype.

but the old man's courage and faithfulness were firm and unbroken to the last.

Another martyred bishop who had a share in the consultations about the Prayer Book, was Ferrar, bishop of St. David's. He is said to have been guilty of some harshness in his diocese, and offended some of his clergy, who accused him of an offence against the statute of *præmunire*, and procured him to be imprisoned. This severity, however, did not shake his attachment to the reformation; for we shall find, that after remaining two years in prison under Edward, he freely gave himself to be burned under Queen Mary.

Next to these five martyrs among the prelates (including Hooper), we may mention Poynet, bishop of Rochester, and afterwards of Winchester, to which see he was removed on Gardiner's deprivation. He was the author of the second catechism, commonly called Edward VI.'s Catechism, published at the end of this king's reign; and wrote a Treatise of Reconciliation, as he called it, on the Eucharist; by which he shewed the primitive doctrine with much clearness, and also how far he was willing to grant the terms which the Romanists insisted on, of the "truth, nature, and substance" of Christ's body in the communion, provided he were not required to believe that the matter was changed. He was a most ingenious man, well read in ancient languages, able to converse in modern, and a skilful mathematician and mechanist, being the constructor of an improved clock, which he presented to Henry VIII. He fled abroad in the reign of Mary, and died at Strasburg at the age of thirty-nine[1].

[1] Stow reports in his Chronicle that Poynet was engaged in Wyatt's rebellion: but Collier, as well as Burnet, rejects the report, as such a man could hardly have been known to be engaged, and not attainted for treason afterwards. A *Treatise on Political Power* was published with the initials D. I. P. B. R. W. in the year of Poynet's death, advocating something like rebellion as well as puritanism, and the design of the letters was to make it believed that the author was Doctor John Poynet, bishop of Rochester and

Harley, bishop of Hereford, was a fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford, and we shall meet with his name again in Queen Mary's reign.

Holbech, bishop of Lincoln, died two years before the death of Edward. He had been a Benedictine monk, and prior of the cathedral at Worcester. He was consulted on the communion-service, and his answers shew how well he had studied the subject, though they prove that he had not unlearnt all the old learning; for he quotes the false decretals as genuine. He was succeeded by John Taylor, another confessor in the reign of Mary.

Miles Coverdale, bishop of Exeter, has been already mentioned as aiding Tyndal in his translation of the Bible. The version of the Psalms in our prayer-books, suited well for the chanted prayer, is his work. He was, like Hooper, too much in love with the Genevan model; and this disposition was unfortunately confirmed by a second residence abroad during the Marian persecution. But he was a devout man, a friend of peace, and an assiduous parish priest.

Bradford the martyr was a chaplain and friend of Ridley's, by whom he was ordained. He was some time before in some office under government, in which he had, like many more exalted persons at that time, appropriated to himself a portion of the public money. A sermon of Latimer's, in which he inveighed against this common dishonesty, had such an effect upon him, that he came voluntarily to the old bishop to confess and make restitution. When Latimer paid back the money into the treasury, he was pressed, as he tells us in one of his sermons, to discover the culprit; "but no," said he, "they should sooner have had this weasand of mine." Bradford was a man of deep piety, but

---

Winchester. But as he appears to have avoided the society of Knox and the other puritans abroad, and remained with those exiles who kept the English Prayer Book at Strasburg, it seems improbable that he should have written thus, and it ought not, as Collier says, to be ascribed to him without better evidence.

so zealous a predestinarian, that he carried on a warm dispute in Newgate against some "froward free-willers," who were confined with him on the same charge of heresy.

The only personal friend of Cranmer, who escaped in the persecution, was Matthew Parker, afterwards very properly selected by Elizabeth, on the re-establishment of the reformed faith, to be archbishop of Canterbury. He was a wise and moderate man, to whose prudence we shall have occasion to observe that the Church was much indebted for its quiet settlement.

A commission was appointed in the last year of this reign, to take possession of what was called the "superfluous" plate and other ornaments belonging to divine service in all churches, leaving only sufficient for the decent administration of the holy offices. The commissioners were also empowered to examine who had seized any plate or altar-cloths, and to proceed against them; for such had been the waste of these things, that the cups for the holy communion were used as drinking vessels, and the costly altar-cloths converted into carpets and cushions. Nor did the schools of learning escape from the general pillage. Commissioners were employed, according to the proclamation before-mentioned as having been issued immediately after the first disgrace of Somerset, to erase the vestiges of superstition from the missals and books of devotion throughout the kingdom. Many of these books were illuminated with pictures, some of them indicating much superstition and ignorance. For instance, there were missals in which the Trinity was painted, God the Father and God the Son, as an old and a young man, with the Holy Ghost above them in the form of a dove, and the Virgin sitting between them, according to the blasphemous legend of some of the friars, of her assumption into the Trinity, which though condemned by the Church, seems to have found a place in the popular devotion. But such was the ignorance of the commissioners, or their dishonesty, that they destroyed many books merely for having the cross richly gilt upon them; and at Oxford

especially, invaluable manuscripts are said to have been ruined, in the library, since restored by Bodley, but originally founded by "the good Duke Humphrey," a munificent patron of learning, and one who read Wycliffe's Bible[1] in the reign of his nephew Henry VI. At the same time, the buildings called "the Schools," also founded by him, went to decay; some are said to have been used by glovers and laundresses, and the divinity school, a beautifully ornamented building, was left with its roof unrepaired, the lead pilfered, and the stained glass windows broken[2]. But it would be unjust to conclude from this circumstance, that sound learning was altogether neglected. It is more probable that the public buildings of the University were ruined for want of funds, and that the lectures were carried on elsewhere. For it was at this very time that Peter Martyr's instructions as Professor of Divinity, were frequented by the whole University, and the lectures of Jewel at Corpus Christi College were hardly less celebrated. Many private individuals of the laity expended large sums of money in maintaining young men at college who were religiously disposed, and Jewel himself had a pension from Chambers, a gentleman of fortune, who was foremost in such good works, and who employed him also sometimes to preach to the poor people to whom he distributed his bounty[3].

King Edward died July 6, 1553, of a pulmonary consumption, at the age of fifteen years and nine months. Among his last instructions for his will, was a charge to his successors to engage in no war, except the realm should be in danger of invasion; to preserve the reformed religion, and complete it by the body of ecclesiastical laws; to reduce the wasteful expenses of the court and household; to increase the endowment of

---

[1] His own illuminated copy of Wycliffe's Bible is now in the British Museum.

[2] INGRAM'S *Memorials of Oxford.*

[3] STRYPE, *Mem.* iii. Pt. 1, p. 117.

St. John's College, Cambridge, the college of his learned tutor, Sir John Cheke, and to found another college, which he wished to be still larger, within the next seven years. He confirmed the grant of the rich Savoy hospital, which he had given a few days before to the city of London as an endowment for Bridewell, an institution founded by him at the request of the citizens, and one much needed for the correction of the idle and disorderly. He also fulfilled his father's design for the foundation of Christ's Hospital, on the site of the Grey Friars, and desired that his father's tomb should be made up; for it seems that that this funeral honour to the great destroyer was yet unpaid; that all his debts should be discharged, and all who had reason to complain of injuries done them should be recompensed.

With regard to the lands which he had granted or sold, being chiefly Church-lands, he directed that the grants should remain undisturbed, and any bargains for which money had been paid should be completed. It is certainly remarkable, that this young king, with all his religious feeling, should have shewn so little perception of the sacrilege and oppression that was going on around him. He does indeed speak in one of his papers of the "impropriation of benefices," as one of the public evils which he wished to have remedied; but otherwise it seems as if he had been taught to look upon all charitable institutions, with their endowments, as subject to be changed, diminished, and even broken up, at the will and pleasure of the Crown. Nor would the practice of even those whom he most regarded go far to discountenance such opinions. For Cranmer himself, though none could justly accuse him of self-interest or extortion, who when the king died had barely more than would pay his debts, had not scrupled to purchase from the crown, in the reign of Henry VIII., the rectory of Aslacton, his native place and the seat of his family, in Nottinghamshire, and the site of the abbey of Kirkstall near Leeds[1].

[1] Possibly, it may have been on this occasion that Cecil wrote

The same circumstance of his education and inexperience led the young king to take part with those who now began to triumph in their separation from Rome, as if the division of Christendom was a thing to be gloried in, and as if a reformation of the universal Church ought not rather to have been the object of both their prayers and endeavours. But his sincerity and his piety are as undoubted as the rest of the gentle qualities which endeared him to his people. And his last prayer was for his country: "O my Lord God, bless my people, and save thine inheritance. O Lord God, defend this realm from papistry, and maintain thy true religion, that I and my people may praise thy holy name, for Jesus Christ's sake." The archbishop, heart-stricken at such a loss, performed the funeral rites, and administered the holy communion according to the primitive form, which he had himself restored for such occasions, little thinking over whose bier it would so soon be used. It is said that Ridley and he had for some time foreboded the ruin of their hopes from the grievous profligacy and avarice by which the courtiers had disgraced the reformation they pretended to promote; and at the end of the reign their efforts had left them equally objects of dislike to those by whom they were opposed, and those who professed to support them.

It is important to observe, that the Church thus reformed was, beyond the posibility of doubt, at the time of King Edward's death, the original Catholic Church in England. It inherited its authority alike from the ancient British and from the Anglo-Saxon Church; nor could it be pretended, at this period, whatever might be

---

to Cranmer, in friendship, telling him he was accused of avarice, and of laying by money for his children. To whom the archbishop replied, that as to falling under the temptation of "them that will be rich," he feared it not half so much as he did stark beggary. As this incident in Cranmer's history, has lately been made the ground of violent censure, the proof of his having *purchased* and not taken a grant of these lands is subjoined in the Appendix.

said against a National Church which had resolved to reform itself in despair of a general Reformation, that it had ceased by that course to be still the Church of England. Even while these things were going on, the Gallican Church had once more been on the point of pursuing a similar course. The Reformation was gaining ground in France, and when on the death of Paul III., his successor, Julius III., had resolved to re-open the Council of Trent, the French King, Henry II., protested against a council held in the emperor's dominions, and summoned in the name of the pope, and not in the name of Christian princes. It met notwithstanding, and in October, 1551, this synod proceeded to its most important business in the absence of any representatives not only of the Protestant states but also of the Catholic Church in France. The only point relating to the Eucharist, which they condescended to adjourn in deference to the wishes of the Protestants, until their ambassadors should arrive, was the question of the cup. Although it was admitted that "one can hardly express the manner of the Real Presence of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist," yet they determined that it is "fitly and properly called Transubstantiation." Thus was a fatal obstacle opposed to the reunion of Christendom, and a definition finally imposed upon the Roman Catholic Church which many of their own writers wished to avoid, and which the decrees of Innocent III. need not have obliged them to adopt. This decree was passed the year after the publication of Cranmer's sentiments on the subject, and the year before the completion of the Articles of the Church of England.

CHAPTER XXII.

REIGN OF QUEEN MARY. RESTORATION OF POPERY. PERSECUTIONS.

Suffering for Truth's sake
Is fortitude to highest victory,
And, to the faithful, death the gate of life.

MILTON.

THE Church, says Bishop Hall, is represented by the emblem of the burning bush. How oft has it been flaming, yet never consumed! The same power that enlightens it preserves it; and to none but His enemies is He a consuming fire. An earnest was given in the first victim.

Who does not know, and who has read without pity and admiration, the story of the young and innocent Lady Jane Gray? She had the wisdom to see the vanity of the ambition that offered her a crown, and the defect of her own title. "I am not so young," she said, "nor so little read in the guiles of Fortune, to suffer myself to be taken by them. If she enrich any, it is but to make them the subject of her spoil; if she raise others, it is but to pleasure herself with their ruins; what she adored but yesterday, is to-day her pastime; and if I now permit her to adorn and crown me, I must to-morrow suffer her to crush me to pieces." Her father and Dudley told her that the throne was hers by law and right; and she then "turned herself to God," as she spoke of it afterwards, imploring his grace and spirit, that if she was to govern, she might do it to his honour and service, and the good of the realm. They carried her to the Tower and proclaimed her queen; but one brief fortnight saw her friends dis-

comfited, and herself and her husband detained as prisoners in the same fortress.

It appears that a few years earlier the hopes of the English reformers had looked forward to a union for her with the young Edward. A Swiss reformer, in a letter to Bullinger, in 1551, mentions the report as a thing then talked of. "But this matter," he adds, "must be ordered by God most high, who alone foresees and disposes all things,"—a pious and prophetic sentence, when we remember how different an alliance, and far different fate, crossed the fortunes of this gentle girl. Her own letter, which accompanied this, quoted the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures in the original tongues, and is written in excellent Latin; but without betraying any consciousness that such attainments were rare[1]. Her last moments were marked by the serene piety of the pure in heart, whose lives have been unspotted from the world, and for whom death has no terrors.

Queen Mary, on hearing of the proclamation of Jane as queen, had escaped in her retreat on a double horse behind the servant of one of her friends; but she had right on her side, and the people of the eastern counties flocked to her standard. Dudley, who went down with a force against her, marched to Cambridge, and sent for Sandys, the vice-chancellor, to preach for his cause, as he had before unfortunately persuaded Ridley to do in London. Sandys took for his text Joshua i. 16, "All that thou commandest us will we do," and managed it so cautiously as to shew that he had done no more than he was commanded. The troops of Dudley deserted him, and he himself went with the mayor to proclaim Queen Mary. He threw up his cap as if in joy; but the beholders rather believed the grief confessed by his

[1] Published lately at Zurich, 1840. "Johannes ab Ulmis," the writer of the above letter, is well known among the foreign reformers. He was erroneously confounded with Aylmer in the first edition.

streaming eyes. "What is more poor and prostrate," says Fuller, "than pride when reduced to extremity!" This proud man, who just before seemed to have a sceptre within his grasp, fell at the feet of Lord Arundel, who came to arrest him, to crave his mercy. He suffered on the scaffold in the following month, declaring that he had been all the while a Romanist at heart; that his adherence to the other side had been only to advance his own purposes; and told the people they would never enjoy peace, till they returned to the faith of their forefathers. It was remarked that this unhappy man, whose only principle was the aggrandisement of his own family, left behind him six married sons; but they all died without issue[1].

The events which followed are well known, as filling some of the saddest and darkest pages of English history. There is every proof that Edward, before his death, in his zeal for the reformed religion, had been persuaded by Dudley to direct the succession so as to exclude his sisters: and the arbitrary way in which his father had repeatedly changed the laws, at one time declaring the two princesses illegitimate, and again restoring them, had left a precedent for other sovereigns to treat the crown as a thing placed at their disposal. But Henry had a power conferred on him by act of parliament to make such changes which was wanting to Edward. Cranmer had of late shared little in the public councils; and it is certain that he had no confidential communication with Dudley, who was indeed his enemy, and, as he himself declared, had been long seeking his destruction. It was Edward who had persuaded him by his dying request, after he had publicly opposed it in the council; and the archbishop, satisfied of the deliberate intentions of one who was as dear to him as a son, being also informed that all the judges had complied, and being denied a private interview

[1] Fuller's *History of Cambridge.*

with the king, whom it was his duty to advise on such a subject, unhappily yielded against his better judgment, and lost one of the noblest occasions he had ever had of a truly magnanimous conduct[1].

Mary was both by interest and affection devoted to the Church of Rome. One pope had authorised her mother's marriage, another had refused to dissolve it, and her own claim to be the legitimate daughter of Henry VIII. depended on these acts. On the other hand, the misfortunes of her mother were connected with the changes that had taken place, and her own severe and mortified character sympathised with the creed which her affections and her sorrows had alike endeared to her. Although she had promised the people of Suffolk that she would not interfere with their religion, a messenger was sent, who travelled in nine days to Rome, to announce her accession and her adherence to the religion of the pope; and the only doubt seems to have been how matters should be carried on towards the accomplishment of this object.

The deprived bishops were immediately set at liberty, and Gardiner, being restored to his diocese, was made lord chancellor, and principal minister of the crown. His advice was to proceed by degrees, and especially to avoid alarming the prejudices of the people by immediately restoring the supremacy of the pope, but

---

[1] Cranmer says in his letter to the council of Queen Mary, "Some of you know by what means I was brought and trained unto the will of our late sovereign lord, King Edward VI., and what I spake against the same; wherein I refer me to the reports of your honours and worships."—JENKYNS, vol. i. p. 366. After reading this simple appeal to those living witnesses, it is impossible to admit the doubt of Lingard, the Romanist historian, whether the account of the interview with Edward is, or is not, to be believed.

It is proper to remember, that the title of the Lady Jane, if it had been ratified by parliament, would have been precisely similar to that of the house of Brunswick, a law excluding a popish successor.

rather to profess at first to bring things back to the condition in which they were at Henry's death. The queen in consequence assumed the title of Head of the Church, and it was as such that she acted for two years in bringing back the dominion of the pope. She at first declared in the council, as she had done to the people of Suffolk, that she would compel no man's conscience in religion; but this was soon modified by the limitation that was added, "until public order should be taken therein by common consent." On the day that Bonner publicly resumed his station at St. Paul's, as Bishop of London, a tumult occurred, and a dagger was thrown at a preacher who advocated "the old religion." It was appeased through the influence of Rogers, one of the prebendaries, who had been appointed by Ridley; but a proclamation was issued by which all preachers were silenced except those who should be licensed by Gardiner, and Rogers himself, and Bradford, another prebendary, also of Ridley's appointment, were soon after committed to prison, probably on the ground that they were intruded into their prebends by a bishop not canonically appointed. Miles Coverdale, bishop of Exeter, and Hooper, bishop of Gloucester, were summoned before the council, and refusing to promise to refrain from preaching according to the order in council, they were also imprisoned. This was in August, 1553, a month after the queen's accession, and while the laws of the late reign remained in force. But the system of making orders in council and proceeding against those who would not comply with them, by which Gardiner and Bonner had been formerly deprived, was now carried to a much greater extent. Judge Hales, having ventured to say in charging a grand jury, that the laws of King Edward relating to religion ought still to be observed, was immediately committed to prison, though he had been the only man among the judges who had ventured to withstand the illegal will of that prince for excluding his sister from the throne. The mass was restored in many churches in London, contrary to law;

the celebration of it was enforced at Cambridge, where Gardiner was chancellor, and although the marriage of priests had been allowed by act of parliament, the Master of Clare Hall was ejected for having a wife. The same prelate extended his authority to Oxford, where he was visitor of Magdalen College, as the successor of its founder in the bishopric of Winchester. This college was distinguished for its attachment to the Reformation. Harley, now bishop of Hereford, and John Foxe, the martyrologist, had been among its fellows, as well as Parkhurst, afterwards bishop of Norwich under Queen Elizabeth, who there imbibed the principles of the Reformation, which after his removal to Merton College he infused into the mind of Jewel, the most distinguished of his pupils. At the time of Gardiner's visitation, the president and fourteen others were turned out, though as yet there was no law to compel them to comply with the Romanising practices.

Peter Martyr upon this quitted Oxford, and came to his friend the archbishop, at Lambeth. Some of the reformers had already fled beyond sea, and many more were preparing to follow them. Cranmer was advised to adopt the same course, and with his usual moderation he recommended it to others to save themselves, quoting the example of our Saviour who went into Samaria when his hour was not yet come, and of St. Paul let down by a basket[1], to escape out of Jerusalem. But as concerning himself, he is said to have spoken to to this effect. "If I were accused of parricide or any such crime, I might perhaps be induced to fly, though innocent. But now that it is a question of my faith not towards man but God, and of the truth of holy Scripture against papal errors, I am resolved to act with the constancy that becomes a Christian prelate, and to quit my life rather than the country[2]." He

---

[1] See his letter to Mrs. Wilkinson, in the Martyr's letters, p. 23.

[2] Godwin, *De Præsul.*, art. Cranmer.

directed his steward to pay all his debts, and expressing his satisfaction that none could now be a loser by his fall, quietly awaited the result. It was thought that Gardiner had a design a design to succeed to the archbishopric, and wished Cranmer not to be deprived till he should have laid his own plans to keep out Cardinal Pole. But, however this may be, when people saw some of the bishops already imprisoned, while the archbishop was still at large, they began to suspect that he was coming over, and this suspicion was confirmed when it was known that the mass had been set up again at Canterbury Cathedral. The person by whom this was done was Thornden, Cranmer's suffragan at Dover, of whose base treachery to his benefactor in the reign of Henry VIII., and of the archbishop's generous forgiveness, an account has been already given. The only two occasions on which any record has been preserved of Cranmer's having been carried beyond the bounds of moderation, are in connexion with the conduct of this man. When he found that the very same man whom he had once forgiven for plotting with Gardiner against his life, was now so regardless of his good fame as to set the example in his own cathedral of undoing all that he had done, he drew up a paper on the subject, in which he declared, that "although he had been well exercised these twenty years to suffer and bear evil reports and lies, and had not been much grieved thereat, but had borne all things quietly; yet untrue reports to the hindrance of God's truth are in no wise to be tolerated and suffered. Wherefore," he continued, "these be to signify to the world, that it was not I that did set up the mass at Canterbury, but it was a false, flattering, lying, and dissembling monk which caused mass to be set up there, without mine advice or counsel," and he offered, if the queen would consent, that he, with Peter Martyr, and four or five more, would "by God's grace take upon them to defend, that not only the common prayers of the Church, the ministration of the sacraments, and other rites and ceremonies, but also that all

the doctrine and religion set out by our late Sovereign Lord King Edward VI., is more pure and according to God's word, than any other doctrine that hath been used in England these thousand years. . . . . And we shall prove, that the order of the Church set out at this present in this realm by act of parliament, is the same that was used in the Church fifteen hundred years past. And so shall they never be able to prove theirs." Whether he would have published this declaration precisely in these terms, cannot now be known, for having given a copy of it to Scory, bishop of Chichester, for his opinion, that bishop permitted other copies to be taken, and so it was published everywhere till London rang with it[1]. Upon this the archbishop was sent for to the council, who expressed their hope that he would be sorry for having put forth such a paper. "Sorry am I, indeed," he replied, "that it should have so gone forth, for I intended to have enlarged it, and to have had it fixed to the doors of St. Paul's, and of all the other churches in London, with my hand and seal to it." Upon this he was committed to the Tower, on the 8th of September, "as well for his late treason against the queen, as for spreading about seditious bills." Latimer was already a prisoner, and Ridley was soon after also committed.

The foreign Protestant clergy, of whom a great number were in England, both from France and Germany, being no longer allowed the exercise of their religion, were however permitted to depart, and Peter Martyr went among them. Many English at the same time took the opportunity to escape disguised as their attendants, but when this was discovered, strict order were given to prevent it; notwithstanding which, great numbers contrived to get away. Most of the bishops

[1] Valerian Pollen, minister of the French Protestants at Glastonbury, who afterwards removed with them to Frankfort, mentions the fact of its having been publicly read on Change. See Arch. Todd's *Cranmer*, vol. ii. 377.

who had been appointed in the late reign had now been imprisoned, including the two archbishops, and five others[1], so that when the parliament met on the 5th of October, three months only after the king's death, there remained but two bishops attached to the religious changes which he had introduced, Taylor of Lincoln, and Harley of Hereford.

Taylor had resolved to speak in favour of the reformation, and he went down to the House of Lords for that purpose. But Gardiner was what the world would call too good a politician not to have a resource to prevent it. A mass of the Holy Ghost was solemnly performed in the queen's presence before the opening of the parliament, which all the members of both houses were required to attend before they took their seats, and these two bishops refusing to do so, they were excluded from the house. It is said also that false returns were made and other extreme measures taken with the members of the House of Commons; and a clergyman who had been chosen and who was of the party of reformation, was now for the first time excluded[2]. The first thing the parliament did was to release the clergy from the penalty of the premunire for any of those acts to which the laws of Henry VIII. had made that penalty extend. This was in order that convocation might proceed to business, in their own right, without the royal licence, which they immediately did with great solemnity. The lower house chose Weston, dean of Westminster, for their Prolocutor, an office answering to that of Speaker to the House of Commons, and he immediately proposed that they should condemn the book of Common Prayer, and define the doctrine of Transubstantiation. Six members ventured to oppose it, two of whom were, Aylmer, archdeacon of Stow, who had been

---

[1] Cranmer, Holgate, archbishop of York, Hooper, Latimer, Ridley, Coverdale, and Ferrar.

[2] Nowel, prebendary of Westminster, afterwards dean of St. Paul's.

the Lady Jane's tutor, and Philpot, archdeacon of Winchester, afterwards burnt to death. By their desire a public argument was appointed, at which a great number of the nobility and others were present, but their request to be assisted by some of the leaders of their party, especially by Ridley and Rogers, was not complied with. The discussion lasted three days; and it was remarkable as the first and last scene of this kind, in which something like equal liberty seems to have been allowed to either side. The end, however, was, as on other occasions, that the reformers were overpowered by numbers and clamour, and they left the house of assembly. After their departure four articles of faith were agreed upon, which in substance were made the test of heresy to all the sufferers in this reign:—

i. That in the sacrament of the altar there is a true and real presence of Christ's body and blood in either kind; and therefore that the laudable custom of communicating in one kind is to be retained.

ii. That the fathers of the Lateran council aptly expressed the mode of Christ's presence in the sacrament by the new term of Transubstantiation, as the Nicene fathers had expressed that the Son is of one substance with the Father by the new term of Consubstantial.

iii. That, since we confess that the true body and blood of Christ is present in the sacrament, how can we but worship him?

iv. That this holy and life-giving and unbloody sacrifice we offer up for the healing of our infirmities, considering that there is on the holy table the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world, there sacrificed by the priests, though without bloodshedding.

There is a tone of reverence and piety in these articles, which makes them to be as good a statement of the Roman doctrine as can easily be found. They were often put forward in a more harsh and thorny style, requiring the person to whom they were offered

to say the substance of bread and wine no longer remained after consecration, but only the natural body and blood conceived by the blessed Virgin. And this must form the lasting condemnation of the agents in the bitter persecution that followed, that they were not content with the most solemn declarations from the prisoners, that they truly believed that the body and blood of Christ were verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful in the Lord's supper; but they forced this contradictory article upon all who came before them, put it home and pressed it with the most ensnaring terms, and would admit no such answer as with a moderate lenity of construction, would have been sufficient to save a man's life. What more can be required of a Christian's faith, inthis point, than is expressed in one of Cranmer's answers, "Christ's body is truly present to them that truly receive him?" What more than Latimer's assertion of a real presence, "because to the faithful believer there is given the real or spiritual body of Christ?" "Let no scorner or sycophant suppose," said the old man, "that I make nothing of the sacrament but a bare and naked sign." And what language more suitable to describe the virtue of this heavenly mystery, than Ridley's, where he says, "By grace the same body of Christ is present with us; even as the same sun, which in substance never removes from its place in the heavens, is yet present here by his beams' light and natural influence, where it shines upon the heart?"

The early part of the year 1554 was occupied in preparing the way for the queen's marriage, and in bringing back the clergy to the obedience of the religious system now restored. A vast number were excluded from their livings chiefly for being married. This number has been stated at twelve thousand, the whole number of parochial clergy being put at sixteen thousand. But it has been shown that in the diocese of Canterbury, out of three hundred and eighty beneficed persons, not more than seventy-three were ex-

pelled, and there is no probability that the whole number throughout the kingdom would exceed this average; but it was a sufficiently sweeping measure which dispossessed one-fifth of the whole clergy at a stroke. A much larger proportion of the bishops was ejected. Five of course were removed to make way for the restoration of those who had been deprived under Edward. But in the month of March, 1554, seven more were turned out, among them Holgate, archbishop of York, who had before been imprisoned. These changes, with the death of one bishop and the resignation of another, placed fourteen sees at the disposal of the government within less than a year of the queen's accession, besides that of Canterbury, which was legally void from the time that Cranmer was convicted of treason, though he was still treated as archbishop, until deprived by the pope.

The crowd of prisoners in the Tower after Wyatt's rebellion, was a providential means of bringing some of the chief reformers together, to their mutual edification and comfort. They had before been kept separate, but now for want of room Cranmer was placed in the same apartment with Latimer and Ridley, to whom was added Bradford, then a prebendary of St. Paul's. So they remained till near Easter[1], confirming one another in the truth of doctrine and in mutual edification and prayer. Then the three bishops were sent, without previous notice, to Oxford, where they were separately imprisoned, the means of writing being denied them, and their servants removed. A deputation had been appointed from the convocation to dispute with them on the points of doctrine already mentioned as having been agreed upon at the last meeting of that body. Accordingly these three propositions were put to them, as the judgment of the church to which their assent was required. "i. In the sacrament of the altar by

[1] Ridley to Grindal: *Martyr's Letters*, p. 52—3.

virtue of the Lord delivered by the priest, there is really present under the appearance of bread and wine, the natural body of Christ, conceived of the Virgin Mary, and his natural blood. ii. After consecration, the substance of bread and wine does not remain, nor any other substance, but the substance of Christ, God and man. iii. In the mass is the life-giving sacrifice of the Church, propitiatory as well for the sins of the living as of the dead." On the 14th of April, Cranmer was brought alone before the commissioners, who sat thirty-three in number before the high altar in St. Mary's church. Not a single bishop was there, the chief person being Weston, the prolocutor of the lower house convocation, who a short time before was a private London clergyman. But the archbishop made no objection on that account, but bowing to them, declined a seat, with such gentle dignity that some of the audience were affected to tears. With regard to the first proposition, he would not answer until he had made them explain what they meant by a real presence; but when they said it is the same body that was born of the Virgin, he replied that he denied it utterly; and the same of the two remaining questions. On the day appointed for the disputation, Cranmer's answer to this first point was that "Christ's true body is truly present, to them that truly receive him, but spiritually." He at the same time delivered in a paper in which his opinions were contained at length, and a few days after, having an opportunity to renew the dispute in the schools, he so confounded the doctors that they gave all sorts of contradictory answers as to the manner in which the Lord's body is in the sacrament; and one of them at last said that Christ being there after such form as it pleased him, we are not to inquire as to the manner of his tarrying or descending into the body; which was precisely the point at which the archbishop wished to arrive. The second proposition of course he absolutely denied: and for the third, he said it was "intricate and wrapped in doubtful words, differing

much from the true speech of scripture; but as the words seem to imply" (namely that Christ is again sacrificed by the priest in the mass), "it is most contumelious against our only Lord and Saviour Christ Jesus, and a violation of his precious blood, which upon the altar of the cross is the only sacrifice and oblation for the sins of all mankind."

The disputation with Cranmer, though carried on with some confusion, was managed on the whole not without a show of respect for the man, and an acknowledgment of the dignified modesty of his own demeanour. But that which was held the next day with Ridley was disgraced by every sort of unfairness; so that he said "he could never have thought that it had been possible to have found any within the realm, being of any knowledge, learning, and ancient degree of school, so brazen-faced and so shameless, as to behave themselves so vainly and so like stage-players, as they did in that disputation." His voice was drowned by hissings, taunts, clapping of hands, and cries of "blasphemy," and when they answered him, he said he "was forced to hear such great reproaches and slanders uttered against him, as no grave man without blushing could abide the hearing of the same spoken of a most vile knave against a most wretched ruffian." He therefore drew up an account of his answers in writing, which he desired might be delivered to the bishops in the upper house of convocation. And he afterwards employed himself in prison in writing a treatise on the subject, in which he said that all the questions relating to this sacrament, such as whether the priest offers up Christ therein, and whether the Host was therefore to be worshipped as God, depend upon the one point, whether there be therein the corporeal substance of the natural body of Christ. And he added that they who deny this corporeal presence do not therefore take away simply and absolutely the presence of Christ's body and blood from the sacrament; "they deny indeed the presence of His body in the natural substance of his

human and assumed nature, but they grant the presence of the same by grace." "By grace, I say, the same body of Christ is present here with us. Even as for example, we say, the same sun which, in substance, never removes from his place out of the heavens, is yet present here by his beams, light, and natural influence, where it shines upon the heart." Latimer was next brought before them, and he also gave in his answers in writing. Concerning the first conclusion he said that "to a right celebration there is no other presence of Christ required than a spiritual presence: and this is sufficient for a Christian man; as a presence by which we both abide in Christ, and Christ in us, to the obtaining of eternal life, if we persevere in his true gospel." "And this same presence," he added, "may be called a real presence, because to the faithful believer there is the real or spiritual body of Christ. Which I here rehearse, lest some sycophant or scorner should suppose me to make nothing else of the sacrament but a bare or naked sign."

The disputations with these illustrious prisoners were each concluded in a day, after which on the Friday in the same week, April, 1554, they were brought all three together to St. Mary's Church, where the delegates were assembled. They were told they were overcome in disputation, and were asked whether they would subscribe or no. Each having answered that he would not, sentence of excommunication was read over them, and they with all who should maintain their doctrine were condemned as heretics. Upon this Cranmer said: "From this your judgment, I appeal to the just judgment of God Almighty, trusting to be present with Him in Heaven, for whose presence in the altar I am thus condemned." Ridley expressed his hope that this sentence "would send them sooner than the course of nature to another place where he hoped their names were written, though cast out from that society;" and Latimer "thanked God most heartily that he had prolonged his life, to the end that he

might glorify God by his death." They were then committed to custody; Ridley and Latimer to the charge of private persons, but Cranmer to the common prison of the town at a place called Bocardo. It was a gateway tower over one of the entrances to the city, crossing the lower part of what is now called the Corn Market, in a line with the old town wall.

Hitherto no step had been publicly taken towards a reconciliation with Rome; and these proceedings were carried on in the name of the convocation or synod of the English Church. It was afterwards declared that they were illegal on that account, and so they were in the eyes of the papal court, since the Church of England was still held to be in schism, but it does not appear that they were illegal as the laws then stood. And indeed the condition of parties at this period deserves some consideration. At the time of King Henry's death, the members of the Church of England, agreeing in all points of doctrine with that of Rome, but denying the supremacy of the pope, might most properly perhaps have been described as Latin Catholics, members of the Catholic Church in Western Christendom, which had originally been called the Latin Church, to distinguish it from the Greek or Eastern part of Christendom; yet not connected with or subject to the Roman pontiff. To this state of things Gardiner had still adhered, while Cranmer, without altering the internal relations of the Church, had been the means of bringing its doctrine to some degree of conformity with the Reformed Churches abroad, and as we also believe to a nearer resemblance of the primitive model. And all parties in England had been so far sincere in the adoption of this intermediate position, that Tonstal, bishop of Durham, though deprived and imprisoned by King Edward's Government, had been far from recognizing the acts of the Council of Trent: on the contrary, he had published a book, as before mentioned, in which he blamed Innocent IV., for making transubstantiation an article of faith, about the same time that the Coun-

cil had decreed directly the reverse. But a great change was now about to be introduced. The queen was married to Philip of Spain in July, A.D. 1554. In September, Bonner issued injunctions to his diocese indicating a more decided return to former practices, requiring among other things that all the scripture texts that had been painted on the walls of churches should be absolutely effaced. And in October, the first indication appeared of an intention to proceed to extremities with those they called heretics, in the following directions to the council from the queen herself. "Touching punishment of heretics, we think it ought to be done without rashness, not leaving (that is, not omitting) in the mean while to do justice to such as by learning would seem to deceive the people: and especially within London, I would wish none to be burnt without some of the council's presence, and both there and everywhere good sermons at the same." In November, Cardinal Pole's attainder having been reversed by act of parliament, he came to London in quality of legate from the Pope, and delivered a long oration to both houses of parliament in the presence of the king and queen, to induce them to return to their obedience to the papal see. Gardiner had informed the emperor a year before that he could not hope to carry the point of the papal supremacy and the marriage both together; and Pole had been purposely detained upon his journey in consequence. The emperor made no secret of borrowing £400,000 towards accomplishing his son's designs in England, and on his arrival, and afterwards, twenty-seven chests of bullion were carried in cartloads to the Tower. In what manner this wealth was employed is matter of conjecture only. There were still found in the House of Commons those who objected to submit to the Pope: but the majority carried it, and both houses brought up a humble address to the king and queen, that they would intercede with the cardinal for their absolution, and that they might be received as penitent children into the communion of the Church.

The cardinal accordingly pronounced a solemn absolution, Te Deum was sung in the chapel royal in the presence of all the members, and St. Andrew's day, on which this was done, was appointed to be ever after observed as the Feast of Reconciliation. It only remained that these acts should be ratified at Rome, for which purpose three ambassadors were sent, who arrived there on the day that a new pope entered upon his office, with the title of Paul IV. It is needless to say that they were welcome; but the Pope took care to keep up his claim of granting kingdoms, and as Henry VIII. had assumed the title of King of Ireland, instead of Lord, a bull was sent conferring that title as a gift from the Pope upon Philip and Mary. He also complained that the Church lands were not restored; but this was more than could be accomplished, and the convocation had been induced to make a formal surrender of all claim to them on the part of the Church, before the act of reconciliation was passed; which surrender and the ratification of the Cardinal was confirmed by law. We have seen that the laws for the punishment of heretics had been wholly repealed, though this unfortunately had not prevented the common law from being enforced: but now it was thought fit to revive them all, so that the ex officio statute of Henry IV., which had been too odious to be maintained even by Henry VIII., was once more placed upon the statute book; an ominous presage of the intentions of those by whom these affairs were directed. The parliament was dissolved in January, 1555, and was concluded by a solemn procession to St. Paul's Cathedral to return thanks for the reconciliation of the nation; and a form of absolution was appointed by which the clergy first, and then the laity throughout the country, were to be re-admitted to what was considered Catholic Communion.

The scenes which were acted through the last three years of this short reign are such as pity would veil from the sight of day, if truth could admit of their

being blotted from remembrance. What can be more horrible to thought, than that the sacrament of Christ's passion, the solemn remembrance and communion of the most transcendent mercy that came to bless mankind, should have been turned to a symbol of destruction, a snare to the conscience of the weak-hearted, and an instrument of condemnation to the resolute, who would not deny with their lips what they inwardly believed! It is the most unhappy sign in the English Romanists of the present day, that they do not unreservedly give up the defence of these deeds of their forefathers.

But it is well. The finger of God was in it; and it taught the English nation how to estimate the men who had been engaged in the Reformation, and to try their work. A cause, for which three hundred persons gave their bodies to be burned, and no fewer than thirty thousand endured exile and the spoiling of their goods[1], shewed in the eyes of Europe and Christendom a moral strength, foretelling that, as these shores had witnessed and borne the brunt of persecution, they should be in years to come the vantage-ground of a purer faith, the asylum and refuge of other sufferers.

It has been a subject of much uncertainty who was the chief originator of these terrible proceedings. The general opinion at and near the time seems to have attributed them to the queen herself, and the assertion of Gardiner, when the protomartyr Rogers accused him of having counselled that course, that "The queen went before them in those counsels, which proceeded of her own proper motion," confirmed as it was by other bishops who were present, and by Rochester, the comptroller of Mary's household, a very confidential servant of hers, would strengthen that impression. But afterwards, when it was considered that Gardiner was her prime minister, that he had been

[1] This number is stated in the Life of Carranza, the Spanish confessor of Mary, and by other Spanish writers of that period.

employed in all that had been done as yet towards bringing back the papal authority, and on the other hand that Cardinal Pole, the other chief person apparently concerned, was a man whose amiable character in private seemed to render his participation in such courses improbable, an impression gained ground that Gardiner and Bonner, who were certainly her ostensible agents, were also her guilty advisers. It is to be feared that Pole, amiable as he was in private life, is not altogether free from blame. The writers of the Church of Rome extol him as the greatest champion of their afflicted cause in the unhappy time at which he lived. They point to his amiable correspondence, the good men with whom he was intimate in youth, such as Sir Thomas More in England, and Sadolet and Contarini, friends of learning and moderate reformation abroad. His natural temper was certainly mild and gentle; and when he presided at the council of Trent, he was always an advocate for gentle measures, wishing the decrees against the Lutherans, as he says, to be drawn up in the language of affection, such as parents use to erring children. But with all this he was one of the many whose better nature has been enthralled by a fanatic devotion to a false principle. When his aged mother and his brothers wrote to him from England, that he was endangering their lives by his open excitement of rebellion against Henry, he continued the same course, and left them exposed to the monarch's vengeance, which was only satisfied with their blood. Though he and his Italian friends were aware of the abuses which had so long been heaped together in the Church and court of Rome, and confessed that the whole Church was brought "to the brink of ruin," and into "a state of mortal disease," under them[1], he had not energy of mind to seek redress by renouncing the usurped power which was the source

[1] RIDLEY'S *Review of Phillips*, p. 79.

of all these abuses, but fondly maintained still, that the maintenance of one Head was the only safeguard for the Christian faith, the only defence for all that was to be preserved, the only oracle of law for what was to be reformed. And as a plain consequence of this false principle, he did not disguise his opinion, that a person of pernicious opinions, and industrious in corrupting others, was worthy of capital punishment, and ought to be cut off as a rotten member from the body of the Church[1]. Hence, when he had heard that Ridley and Latimer had refused to listen to the solicitations of the Spanish ecclesiastic whom he desired to try to reclaim them, he expressed his approbation of their sentence, coolly observing that "no man can save those whom God has abandoned[2]." He gave his consent to the burning of Cranmer, after his recantation, as is affirmed by good authority[3]; though he had before written to him to say that "if he could by any means rescue him from that dreadful sentence, not only of body but of soul, which was hanging over him, he would gladly prefer it, God knows, to all the riches and honours which this life could afford[4]." And as in his own diocese of Kent he did little to check the cruelties of Thornden and Harpsfield, who burnt nearly sixty persons at Canterbury, Maidstone, and other towns; so it is remarkable that in the diocese of Lincoln the only sufferer during this reign was a poor man at Leicester, who was committed to the flames under a sentence, not of his own bishop, but of the delegates of Pole during his archiepiscopal visitation. There is no getting rid of the evidence of these facts; and they prove that high moral worth and a highly cultivated mind were not enough to save a man from abetting persecution, who had persuaded himself that

---

[1] Pole's *Epistles*, by Quirini, P. iv. p. 156.
[2] Ibid, P. v. p. 47.
[3] By Abp. Parker, *Antiq. Britann.* p. 533.
[4] Philips' *Life of Pole*, ii. 203.

to disown the Pope for head of Christendom was the same thing as renouncing Christianity.

With regard to Stephen Gardiner, he was a political enemy to Cranmer, and thus he has gained the credit of being as much the adviser of these atrocities, as Bonner was their executioner[1]. But first, it must be observed, that he had presided in the queen's council as lord chancellor more than a year before the persecuting laws were revived: and he died within ten months after the first blood, that of Rogers, the proto-martyr, had been shed. And it is well known, that the burnings were rather increased than mitigated after Gardiner's death. The character of this prelate has been undeservedly loaded with the weight of this charge, however he may have given support to it by a few instances of harshness. His aim was to hold political power and distinction, and to secure this his means were not such as become a prelate; but he had no delight in the task that was laid upon him in coercing heretics, which he soon gave up to other hands. It is only just to acknowledge that as a statesman he did his duty to his country, in excluding all Spaniards from offices of government under Philip and Mary, and taking care that no innovation should be made in the laws of succession and other customs of the realm.

There remains only a third party to be considered; and the chief of this party was certainly one whose subsequent conduct renders it no injustice to suspect him of having used his influence to drive matters to extremity. This is Philip of Spain, the son of Charles

[1] The long arguments for and against persecution, which the historian Hume puts into the mouth of Gardiner and Pole, are nothing more than what Catharine Parr's correspondent would call "most grave discourse about the moon shining in the water." Burnet and Collier had set down something of the kind before; but Philips, the Roman Catholic biographer of Pole, justly remarks, that there is no trace of it in any of the records.

V., who was induced by the ambitious hope of uniting England to the Spanish crown, to ally himself to the reigning queen. The re-establishment of the papal cause in England was one of the first objects with both these affianced princes; Mary was bent upon it, as necessary to the good of her soul, as well as the security of her reign; and Philip was the son of a father whose chief regret in his retirement was, that he had suffered Luther to escape alive, after he had given him letters of safe conduct.

It is so long since we have known in England the name of any persecuting sovereign, and the principles of the powerful opponents of the Reformation are now so near forgotten, that there will be something instructive in a glance behind the scenes at this remarkable despot, whose arms and policy so long held the fate of Europe in suspense, and in turns annoyed the German Protestants and shook the papal throne. It is well known with what solemnity Charles V. at length forsook the toils of state, and retired to end his days in a monastery. From this retreat, however, he still sent his advice and directions to the ministers of state and the governors of provinces; and two days before his death he wrote his advice about religion to his son:

"I have written," he said one day to the monks of the convent where he closed his life,—"I have written to Juan de Vega, the president of the council of Castile, and to the inquisitors, to employ all their care in seeing heretics burnt. Let them indeed try to make them Christians before their punishment; but not fail to burn them, for I am persuaded that none of them will become in future true Catholics, because of their love for reasoning and disputing; and if the magistrates let them off, they will commit as great a fault as I did in suffering Luther to live. I ought to have remembered that this heretic had offended a greater master than me, namely, God himself. I might, and I ought to have forgotten my promise, and to have avenged the wrong which he did to God."

"It is very dangerous," he said again, "to dispute with heretics: their reasons are so convincing, and they offer them with such skill, that they can easily impose upon a man; and for this reason I have never chosen to listen to them when they wished to state their opinions. When I went to attack the Landgrave, the Duke of Saxony, and the other Protestant princes, there were four of them who came to seek an interview with me: 'Sire,' said they, 'we do not come before your majesty as enemies; we do not purpose to make war with you, nor to refuse the obedience we owe; but only to declare to you our sentiments, for which we are reputed heretics, though we are not so. Suffer us to come into your majesty's presence, attended by some divines, and give them leave to defend our faith before you. If your majesty will only hear us, we engage to submit to whatever you shall judge it expedient to direct.' I told them that I had not knowledge sufficient for such a discussion, and that they must communicate with my divines, who would make a report to me. In fact, I have had very little instruction in learning; I had scarcely studied my grammar when I had to begin attending to public business; and from that moment it has been impossible for me to continue my studies. If they had succeeded in making me relish some of their propositions, how could I ever have driven them out of my mind, and have become disabused? This was my motive for refusing to hear them, though they had promised, if I would have granted their prayer, to march with all their forces to aid me against the king of France, who had then crossed the Rhine."

To the same purpose were his last instructions to Philip: "I desire above all things," he said, "to inspire my son, of whose Catholic sentiments I am well aware, with a wish to imitate my conduct. I pray and recommend him as earnestly as I can, and feeling it my duty to do so, and more, I command him as a father, by the obedience which he owes me, to labour with care, as for an essential object in which I take a special interest, to

see that the heretics in his dominions be pursued and chastised with all the public exposure and the severity which their crime merits, without allowing any guilty person to escape, and without regard to any prayers, or to the rank and quality of any one. I bind him above all to protect the holy office of the Inquisition, in respect to the great number of crimes which it prevents, as well as those which it punishes, remembering what I have charged him to do in my last will, that he may fulfil his duty as a prince, and make himself worthy of the protection of the Most High[1]."

When we read these private thoughts of one of the great contemporaries of Henry VIII., we may well be content with the lot of our own country, which was visited at least with a tyrant who would listen to the arguments on both sides, and had knowledge enough to burst the bonds which Charles and his son riveted with such dark zeal upon the neck of Spain.

Under such a father was Philip trained, and with such a religion he came to England. In this country his own part was kept secret; but a few years later in his own kingdom he shewed his gratitude to the Providence which had saved him from a danger of shipwreck, by condemning thirteen persons at once to the stake, and shortly after by being present at a scene of the same kind at Valladolid, when twenty-eight more, many of the first nobility in Spain, were sacrificed; and to prevent the importunities of relations and friends of the accused, he vowed that "he would himself carry the faggots to make up the pile for his only son Don Carlos, if that young prince should ever become a Lutheran."

There is no need to look further for the instigator of the persecution. Philip, and those whom he brought with him, directed the queen's conscience, and inspired her natural bigotry with a zeal only to be appeased with blood. Before his own arrival, he had sent over Bar-

---

[1] Llorente, from Sandoval, *Hist. of the Inquisition*, ii. 155.

tholomew Carranza, who was afterwards promoted by him to the archbishopric of Toledo, attended by a number of other ecclesiastics, who were to be employed in re-converting England to the religion of the Inquisition[1]. Of these, the most celebrated were Pedro de Soto, a Dominican friar, confessor to Charles V., who was made Regius Professor of Theology at Oxford, the office lately occupied by Peter Martyr, and Juan de Villagarcia, of the same order, who from the name given him by Foxe seems to have been known at Oxford as Friar John, who read divinity lectures at Lincoln and Magdalen Colleges. The historian eulogizes the success of these divines in bringing back that famous university to Catholic doctrine, and says of Carranza, that "on his counsel and disposal depended the major part of the spiritual government of the kingdom," which may be the rather believed as he was soon appointed to the office of Confessor to the Queen. "By his contrivance," says the same writer, "many were consigned to the flames, and among them was burnt alive Thomas Cranmer, usurping archbishop of Canterbury, *who gave sentence against Catharine*[2]." Here then we have an additional motive avowed for these proceedings. It was a national quarrel, and the life of Cranmer was due to Spanish honour, which had been wounded by the divorce of Catharine. It were a pity to deprive them of that share in the credit of these proceedings which they were so anxious to claim, and it is no longer difficult to understand how the unhappy queen, accustomed to place her conscience at the disposal of her confessor, and that confessor acting under the direction of a husband whom she longed

[1] The account here given of the Spanish part in the Marian persecution is chiefly derived from three papers in the *British Magazine*, 1839 and 1840, Nos. 96, 98, and 102, by the archdeacon of Cleveland, who has, with equal diligence and success, examined many of the Spanish authorities.

[2] Fernandez, *Historia Ecclesiastica del Nuestros Tempos.* Toledo, 1611.

in vain to conciliate, should have been brought to sanction measures from which her woman's heart must surely have revolted[1].

Further evidence to the same effect is supplied from the conduct of another of these Spaniards in the following year, when the indignation of the people appeared to be directed against Philip after the persecutions had begun. It was seen that the attempt to put down the Reformation by force had failed. After the first executions, other prisoners remained equally resolved to stand to their doctrine to the death, and the nation was exasperated against the authors of the persecution. Gardiner had been willing to make a trial of severities, but he now became reluctant to interfere any further; and the odium was laid upon the king. It was at this period that a sermon was preached at court by Alphonso de Castro, the confessor of Philip, in which he condemned these proceedings in the most pointed manner, as contrary both to the text and the spirit of the Gospel. He said it was "not by severity but by mildness, that men were to be brought into the fold of Christ; and that it was not the duty of bishops to seek the death, but to instruct the ignorance of their misguided brethren." Such sentiments excited much notice from such a quarter. The persecution had a short respite, and when it was resumed, the guilt was naturally laid upon the bishops, who seemed to be indulging their own resentments contrary to the wishes of the court. But an investigation of this preacher's character and writings places his conduct in a very different light[2]. Eight years before, he had published a book entitled *On the just punishment of Heretics*, which he dedicated to

---

[1] But it is necessary to the truth of history to mention that on one occasion, at least, Mary exhibited the pitiless spirit of a persecutor in the most undisguised form. See in the Appendix, an extract from the report of Noailles, the French ambassador, of his interview with her on this subject.

[2] Alphonsus a Castro, *De Justâ Hæreticorum Punitione*. Ed. sec. Leyden, 1566.

Charles V., and in which he said they ought to be dealt with "not with words, but with clubs, and whips, and swords." And lest it should seem that subsequent reflection had mitigated his feelings on the subject, he put forth in the year 1556, the very next year after this sermon was preached, a second edition of the same book, which he dedicated to Philip himself, stating that he had enlarged it while resident in England, serving his master *in public sermons* and matters of faith. He tells Philip that he had well deserved his title of Defender of the Faith, by reconciling a kingdom in four months, after twenty years' apostacy; and he devotes one of his chapters to an account of this reconciliation, and another to the description of the different modes of putting heretics to death in different countries, which he seems to have collected as a matter of curiosity, and some of which he had witnessed[1]. And this was the man who, while employed upon such a book, stood forth as the advocate of moderation, to turn the popular indignation away from his master against the English bishops!

---

[1] See *British Magazine*, ut supra.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE PERSECUTIONS. THE BISHOPS AT OXFORD. DEATH OF RIDLEY AND LATIMER. TROUBLES AT FRANKFORT.

> Yet I tell you
> You tender not your person's honour, nor
> Your high profession spiritual: that therefore
> I do refuse you for my judge.—SHAKSPEARE.

WE are now to see what was the course of that process, by which modern Romanists would tell us it was intended to "terrify the party of the reformers by some instances of justice, which as it usually happens, degenerated into something like cruelty[1]." A commission was issued by the Cardinal Legate to Gardiner, Bonner, Tonstal, and other bishops, to proceed against the heretics. On the 29th of January, 1555, Rogers and Bradford, the two prebendaries of St. Paul's before mentioned, Hooper, bishop of Gloucester, and Rowland Taylor, the learned and assiduous parish priest of Hadleigh, were brought before this commission, and refusing to conform, were delivered to the secular power. Of these John Rogers was the first victim. He was a man of great learning, had been a friend of Tyndal's, and with regard to the chief point of the Sacrament, was so far from holding extreme opinions, that he said on his trial, he was suspected by some to be of a contrary opinion to many of his brethren. But he would not allow the corporeal presence. All these four were married men, yet so far

[1] DOD'S *Church History*, a work lately republished in a cheap form for Roman Catholic readers. Dr. Lingard also says that Cranmer and his associates were dealt with "on their own principles." What! did they burn those who believed transubstantiation?

was this circumstance from daunting their courage, that it was rather an additional motive with them to suffer, for the sake of the character of their wives and children; for the system to which they were opposed stigmatized their wives as concubines and their children as illegitimate. Rogers was brought to the stake in Smithfield on the 4th of February, A.D. 1555. His wife was a foreigner, and when he found he was to leave her a widow, with ten orphan children, he asked that she might come to visit him till his death, that he might advise her what to do; but Gardiner refused it, telling him she was not his wife. Very different, however, was the effect of this first spectacle of blood from what had been expected by the contrivers of it. His children met him on his way to execution, and stood by to encourage him during the fiery trial. He washed his hands in the flame, and endured it with triumphant resolution, while the spectators greeted his devoted spirit with loud acclamation. And such an indication of the temper of the people was thought so important, that the French ambassador reported it to his court, and said that the man went to be burnt as if he had been going to a marriage[1]. But the work went on, and it was thought expedient that some should suffer in those places where their labours had been most conspicuous. Saunders had been well known at Coventry, at which place therefore he was brought to the stake on the 8th of February, On the day following, Hooper suffered in front of his cathedral at Gloucester, and Taylor was burnt at his own parish of Hadleigh, amidst the blessings and prayers of his parishioners. His wife, being refused admittance to his prison, but having learned the day when he was to be sent down into Suffolk, watched for him all night with his children in the porch of St. Botolph's church, in Aldgate, and there he knelt with them in prayer, and gave them his parting blessing; nor can we fail here to record how richly

[1] See NOAILLES, *Ambassades en Angleterre.*

that parting prayer was answered, if it be true that one of those children became the father, or grandfather, of one of the most eloquent and illustrious men whom the English church can boast, Bishop Jeremy Taylor.

It was now that some delay took place, when it is supposed that the English bishops were unwilling to proceed; but on the 16th of March an artisan was burnt in Smithfield, and not long after two gentlemen suffered near their own houses in Essex, and a priest and some others in Suffolk. Another bishop was executed in his own diocese in the end of the same month, being condemned to the flames by the person who had succeeded to his bishopric. This was Farrer, bishop of St. David's, whose fate was peculiarly hard, for he had been imprisoned almost ever since he came to his bishopric, during the reign of Edward VI., on a false accusation. He suffered with great fortitude at Carmarthen. Coverdale, late bishop of Exeter, had a narrow escape: the king of Denmark, who had known him abroad, begged his life, which was reluctantly and ungraciously granted, and he was permitted to retire to the Continent. Instructions were sent down to several counties, that the justices of the peace should divide their county into districts, and have one or two in every parish secretly employed to discover heretics, and Bonner having abstained for some weeks from condemning any to death, the king and queen wrote to him in May, to have more regard to the office of a good pastor and bishop. Bradford, the companion of the three bishops in the Tower, though condemned together with Hooper and Rogers, had been respited for awhile, but in the month of July, after many endeavours had been made to induce him to recant, his doom also was fixed. Attempts were now made to have these executions less public, and Bradford was conveyed at midnight to Newgate, to be ready for his fate in Smithfield the next morning; but even at that hour multitudes watched for him, and Smithfield was crowded by four o'clock in the morning of his death, which he underwent in company

with a youth of nineteen, an apprentice, who was condemned for the same opinions. It will be no surprise to find the notorious Thornden, Cranmer's suffragan, so often mentioned, forward in persecution, and he had a worthy associate in Harpsfield, archdeacon of Canterbury. These men condemned two priests and two laymen to the stake at Canterbury, and a woman and four men in other parts of that diocese. And in the three succeeding months, from thirty to forty more were burnt in different places in the kingdom.

The three bishops at Oxford had remained in custody since their condemnation the year before, and it was determined that fresh proceedings should be taken against them under the authority of the Pope. Cranmer had occupied himself in preparing a reply to Gardiner's answer to his book upon the Sacrament, and Ridley wrote a small treatise on the subject. Latimer did little else than read his Testament, and pray for strength to endure his trial, and for a restoration once again of gospel truth to England, often repeating the words, "Once again, Lord, once again." A most interesting record of the feelings and sufferings of these confessors, and of their brethren in London, is preserved in the letters which passed amongst them, which were afterwards collected by Coverdale, and published in the reign of Elizabeth, in a book still well known as the *Martyrs' Letters*. A more interesting document, or one which, with a few exceptions, breathes a more holy and heavenly spirit it would be difficult to find; and it is, at the same time, the most authentic record of their opinions on many points of importance. But in none are they more conspicuous than in the well-assured confidence in the justice of their cause, and joyful anticipation of reward. Ridley writes to the brethren in captivity in London—"Trust to the truth of our cause, which as it may by the malice of Satan be darkened, so can it never be clean put out. For we have (high praise be given to God therefore,) most plainly, evidently and clearly on our side, all the pro-

phets, all the apostles, and undoubtedly all the ecclesiastical writers which have written until of late years past." And in another letter, after his condemnation, he said, "Know ye, that I doubt no more but that the causes for which I suffer are God's causes, and the causes of the truth, than I doubt that the gospel which John wrote is the gospel of Christ, or that Paul's epistles are the very word of God." The consent of the ancient Church in their opinions was a point on which they were peculiarly strong. Cranmer's challenge to prove the agreement of the reformed Liturgy with that of the primitive fathers has been mentioned, and Taylor, in his examination before Gardiner, declared his belief, that this Liturgy had been "by that one reformation (meaning the revision of the first Prayer Book,) so fully perfected, that no Christian conscience could be offended with anything therein contained." And when Gardiner upon this called him an ignorant beetlebrow, he answered that he "had read over and over again the Holy Scriptures, and St. Augustine's works through, and St. Cyprian, Eusebius, Origen, Gregory Nazianzen, with divers other books, throughout." But the temper with which they took their trials is still more remarkable. "Lament not our state," said Ridley, in answer to a letter from his friend Grindal, who was among the exiles at Frankfort, "but I beseech you and them all, to give unto our heavenly Father for his endless mercies and unspeakable benefits, even in the midst of our troubles, most hearty thanks." And in a letter to his own relations and family, he invites "all that be his true lovers and friends, to rejoice and rejoice with him again, and render with him hearty thanks to God our heavenly Father, that for his Son's sake, our Saviour and Redeemer Christ, he had vouchsafed to call him, being else, without his gracious goodness, in himself but a sinful and a vile wretch, to call him unto this high dignity of his true prophets, of his faithful apostles, and of his holy elect and faithful martyrs, that is, to die and spend this temporal life in the defence of his

eternal and everlasting truth." And Taylor, so far from condoling with the Oxford prisoners, told them that he praised God again and again for their excellent promotion. "I cannot utter with pen how I rejoice in my heart for you three such captains in the forward under Christ's cross or standard. This is another manner of nobility than to be in the forefront in worldly warfare. For God's sake pray for us, for we fail not daily to pray for you. We are stronger and stronger in the Lord, (his name be praised!) and we doubt not but ye be so in Christ's own sweet school. Heaven is all and wholly on our side. Rejoice in the Lord alway, and again rejoice." And such also were Hooper's sentiments. "Blessed shall we be if ever God make us worthy of that honour to shed our blood for his sake. And blessed then shall we think the parents which brought us into this world, that we shall from this mortality be carried into immortality."

Many affecting incidents might be collected from these letters of mutual kindness among the martyrs and their friends. The three bishops at Oxford had everything in common, and presents were sent them from time to time; sometimes of clothes, sometimes of money, for all had been taken from them. Several ladies of quality, in some instances personally unknown to them, were forward in thus ministering to their wants, and they repaid it with their gratitude and their prayers. Another touching record of those times is the reconciliation of Hooper with Ridley. It will be remembered that Ridley had attempted in vain to convince Hooper of the impropriety of his conduct in refusing to wear the episcopal dress, and that their intercourse was suspended in consequence. But now that each was preparing to render his life for the common cause, Hooper wrote twice to Ridley, whose confinement was at that time so strict, that he had difficulty in answering it, but as soon as he was able he replied in a Latin letter in these affecting terms. "Howsoever at one time we have each of us, I confess, your wisdom

and my simplicity, had our own opinion in smaller matters and the appendages of religion, yet now let my friend be assured that I love you, my brother, from my heart in the bowels of Christ, for the sake of the truth which abideth in us, and I am persuaded, by the grace of God, shall abide for ever;" and he concluded thus—"farewell, and yet once more and for ever in Christ, dearest brother, a kind farewell." The more moderate sentiments of Ridley, and his friends Bradford and Rogers, were displayed in other matters besides that of the clerical dress, which had caused the temporary estrangement from Hooper, thus so happily concluded. He confessed that he had not liked some things that were done, and admitted, as has been before noticed, that he wished to have retained auricular confession; not, probably, in the way it was then used in the Church of Rome, but in the manner provided for in the first Reformed Liturgy. It also appears that while he rejected the invocation of saints, he was not afraid to bespeak the prayers of those who were going before him to the abodes of bliss. For when he knew that Bradford's doom was fixed, he wrote to him—"Brother, so long as I shall understand that thou art in thy journey, by God's grace I shall call upon our heavenly Father for Christ's sake, to set thee safely home; and then, good brother, speak you and pray for the remnant that are to suffer for Christ's sake, according to that thou then shalt know more clearly."

On the 12th of September, a year and a half almost after his first condemnation by the delegates of the English Convocation, Cranmer was brought into St. Mary's Church to a solemn hearing before the commissioners of the pope and the queen. The pope's commissioner was Brooks, master of Baliol College, who had lately been made bishop of Gloucester. He was seated on high in front of the altar, the two commissioners of the king and queen being placed on lower seats at either side. The prisoner was cited by the name of Thomas, archbishop of Canterbury, and he

stood forward accordingly, and made low obeisance to the royal commissioners, but without noticing the papal delegate, assigning for his reason that he meant no personal disrespect, but that he had sworn never to admit the pope to have henceforth any authority in England. The accusations against him were divided under three heads, blasphemy, incontinence, and heresy; but the arguments chiefly turned upon the papal authority, and upon his own part in taking an oath to the pope under a protest, when he was made archbishop. The imputation of incontinence was founded upon his having been married, which he acknowledged, and justified: but the other accusations he of course repelled. He was not now degraded, but was sent back to prison, and was soon after cited to appear at Rome before the pope himself. This citation upon a prisoner, who had not liberty to appear, was a mere form, but it afforded him an opportunity of writing a letter to the queen, to express his readiness to go if he might be permitted to do so, in which letter he gave a summary of his answers before the commissioners, which is the best account of his defence that has been preserved. He expresses his grief at having been accused before a foreign power by the king and queen in their own dominions, and tells her he had sworn to her father never to consent to such authority. He shews that the laws of England are in many respects contrary to those of the pope, and supposes that these things were not sufficiently opened in the parliament house when the pope's authority was received again within the realm. As to which matters, he says, "Ignorance may excuse others, but he who knoweth that I do know cannot be excused." He also sums up very forcibly the answers he had given respecting the eucharist. "As touching the sacrament, I said, — — I would be judged by the old Church, and which doctrine could be proved the elder that I would stand unto. And forasmuch as I have alleged in my book, many old authors, both Greeks and Latins, which about a thousand years after Christ, continually

taught as I do, if they could bring forth but one old author that saith in these two points as they say, I offered six or seven years ago, and do offer yet still that I will give place to them. — — Yea the old Church of Rome about a thousand years together neither believed nor used the sacrament as the Church of Rome hath done of late years. For in the beginning, the Church of Rome taught a pure and a sound doctrine of the sacrament, but after that, the Church of Rome fell into a new doctrine of transubstantiation, and with the doctrine they changed the use of the sacrament, contrary to that Christ commanded and the old Church of Rome used above a thousand years. — — The body of Christ in the sacrament, by their doctrine, — — goeth into the mouth with the form of bread, and entereth no farther than the form of bread goeth, and tarrieth no longer than the form of bread is by natural heat in digesting, so that when the form of bread is digested that body of Christ is gone[1]. — — It seemeth to me a more sound and comfortable doctrine, that Christ hath but one body, and that hath form and fashion of a man's true body, which body spiritually entereth into the whole man body and soul, and though the sacrament be consumed yet whole Christ remaineth, and feedeth the receiver unto everlasting life, if he continue in godliness, and never depart until the receiver forsake him."

A week after Cranmer's trial, Ridley and Latimer were brought to the same place before three bishops holding commission from the cardinal in the name of the pope. Brooks, bishop of Gloucester, was again on the commission, and his colleagues were White of Lincoln, and Holyman of Bristol. They in like manner

---

[1] That this is literally the doctrine of the Church of Rome in the present day appears from their books of catechetical instruction. After an injunction not to spit after communion, the question occurs, "How long does the Body of Christ remain after you have communicated?" Answer: "About a quarter of an hour."

declined to show any token of respect to the pope's authority, and both refusing to recant, were condemned as heretics. A fortnight was still allowed them, during which every endeavour was made to shake their fortitude. But they had long ago armed themselves by mutual conference and prayer, and their endurance was a reward of the humility and fearfulness with which they had prepared themselves. We have seen that Cranmer acted boldly and spoke manfully; it is worthy perhaps of remark, in reference to the final conduct of both, that Ridley, when first imprisoned, feared for his own constancy, and sought to confirm his steadfastness by frequent conference with Latimer, whose characteristic answer on one occasion was, "I only learn to die in reading of the New Testament, and am ever now and then praying unto my God, that he will be a helper unto me in time of need." On the 15th of October they were brought again before the commissioners, to be degraded, who, however, would not admit their character of bishops, but degraded them only as priests; and the next morning was fixed for their execution. The place selected was the ditch outside the city wall, in that part immediately facing the lodgings of the master of Baliol College, who, as already mentioned, was at that time Brooks, bishop of Gloucester, one of the commissioners who condemned them. In their way they had to pass under the gateway tower, called Bocardo, where Cranmer was imprisoned, and Ridley who came first looked up hoping to receive his friend's farewell; but the archbishop was engaged in controversy with one of the Spanish friars, and was not aware till they had both passed. Latimer was not far behind, and when he was come to the spot, Ridley embraced him and said, "Be of good heart, brother, for God will either assuage the fury of the flame, or strengthen us to abide it." They kneeled down and prayed together, and after a short sermon against their doctrine, to which they were not permitted to reply, they prepared for the stake. When Latimer's clothes were

taken off, it was found that he had on a shroud for his under garment, and now the bystanders observed that he whom they had seen a poor old man bowed down with years and infirmity, stood upright with an air of venerable dignity that bespoke the high resolve of his soul. "Be of good comfort, Master Ridley," he exclaimed, when a lighted faggot was laid at Ridley's feet; "we shall this day light such a candle, by God's grace, in England, as I trust shall never be put out." When the pile was lighted for himself, he bent towards the flames, as if he would embrace them, exclaiming, "Oh, Father of heaven, receive my soul!" and soon expired. Ridley's sufferings were much more protracted. Most of the spectators were adherents of the opposite party, for the reformers were fled or silenced. The magistrate who presided was Lord Williams of Thame, who had been rewarded with a peerage for having been the first in Oxfordshire to proclaim the queen; and Dr. Smith the preacher, was one of those unhappy persons who had abjured the reformed doctrine, and who, like Shaxton formerly, was requited with such an employment. But a few friends had still adhered to them, among whom were Shipshed, a clergyman, who had married Ridley's sister, and Augustine Bernher, the faithful attendant of Latimer, who had been employed to convey most of the letters and messages that passed between the prisoners in Oxford and those in London, and who afterwards himself became a preacher of the reformed doctrine. Nor was this spectacle without its effects upon some of those who came to witness it with different feelings. Julius Palmer, a fellow of Magdalen College, was induced to embrace their doctrine, and afterwards suffered for it at the stake; and even one of the Spanish friars, Constantine Ponce, a man of great learning, a canon of Seville, and preacher to Charles V., imbibed the opinions which he was brought to England to refute, and died a prisoner of the inquisition at Seville.

It was a question of painful interest, in these times,

how far it was allowable to comply with the restored religion. There is no doubt of its being a Christian duty to submit to the ordinances of man, when we can do so consistently with our higher duty towards God. And probably this consideration may have had weight with such men as Sir William Cecil, who, though he had been of King Edward's council, and was attached on principle to the same sentiments, attended mass once at least during this reign in the parish church of Wimbledon, where he lived. It was a very different case with those who were publicly called upon to answer for their opinions; and we have seen that in Henry's reign, Frith and some others were willing to keep their sentiments to themselves, at the same time that they were resolved not to deny them if challenged. And this was the genuine spirit of martyrdom, and those who did so deserve to be called martyrs; not wantonly throwing away their lives, yet refusing to compromise or suppress what they believed to be God's truth. But amidst these fiery trials it is no wonder that some should have been found unequal to the task of maintaining their faith with their lives. One of the first of those who renounced his former profession, and that apparently under no coercion, was Harding, who had been a chaplain in the Duke of Suffolk's family, and to whom Lady Jane Gray wrote, before her death, a letter of indignant reproof for his apostacy. He appears to have changed his religion within one week after King Edward's death, having been before among the most violent and abusive opponents of the opinions which he so suddenly adopted; and this circumstance may account for the very strong language which the Lady Jane adopted towards him. He became afterwards a bitter controversionalist on the side which he had espoused, and was the great opponent of Jewel in the time of Queen Elizabeth. It does not appear that more than one of the reforming bishops recanted. This one was Scorey, bishop of Chichester, who, having been removed from his see, afterwards renounced his marriage, and received absolution from Bonner. It

seems, however, that he soon repented, and fled abroad, for he is mentioned a year after in a letter from Grindal to Ridley as having an English church, with some other exiles, at Frisland, and we find mention of him soon after at Emden. Another person, of whom better things seem to have been expected, was West, chaplain and steward[1] to Ridley when bishop of London. This man having recanted, wrote to Ridley when in prison urging him to save his life by doing the same, reminding him that he had always disliked extreme courses. The bishop's answer and the fate of the man are equally remarkable. "I say unto you, in the word of the Lord, that if you do not confess and maintain to your power and knowledge, that which is grounded upon God's word, but will either for fear or gain of the world, shrink and play the apostate, *indeed you shall die the death.* You know what I mean; and I beseech you remember what I say, for this may be the last time peradventure that ever I shall write unto you." Ridley of course alluded to his own approaching fate, and little could either of them at that time foresee how differently these words should be fulfilled from the way in which they were meant. But we find it thus adverted to not long after in a letter of Ridley's to Grindal. "West, your old companion and sometime mine officer, alas, hath relented, as I have heard; *but the Lord hath shortened his days, for anon he died and is gone.*"

A still more distressing case was that of Sir John Cheke, one of King Edward's tutors, and brother-in-law of Sir William Cecil. Having been imprisoned for joining the party of Jane Gray, he was pardoned and went abroad. But having joined the church of the exiles at Strasbourg, he was entrapped into visiting his wife at

---

[1] Coverdale, or the editor of the *Martyrs' Letters*, calls him chaplain. Ridley makes mention of him as "sometime mine officer," and others call him steward. As such offices were probably still performed by clergymen, it seems likely that he was both.

Brussels, where he was seized by order of King Philip and brought to England. Here he was told to choose between recantation and the stake, and after some conferences with Pole he sacrificed his conscience for his life. They carried him about to the public disputations with the reformed, and paraded him as their convert; but it was not for long, for he sickened soon, and died of a broken heart. Equally lamentable was the fall, but more happy the recovery of Jewel, a man already celebrated at Oxford, and who ventured to remain there for some time, and was employed to take notes of the first examinations of the bishops. But through the agency of Marshall, dean of Christ Church, who had himself professed the same opinions during the former reign, though now among the bitterest persecutors, Jewel was brought into St. Mary's Church and required to subscribe to the Romish doctrine in the fullest and most ample sense. Veiling under an air of levity the bitterness of his soul, he asked if they wished to see how he could write, and affixed his name. But he fled soon after, and being pursued, escaped with difficulty through the kindness of Latimer's faithful servant Augustine Bernher. He went to Frankfort, and there made public confession of his apostacy, with abundant tears, in the pulpit of the English Church. Upon this he was hailed by them as a brother, and he lived to prove that their forgiveness was well bestowed. There was another clergyman, Thomas Whittel, who recanted, but afterwards returned to his former confession, and expiated his offence at the stake. But these instances are enough to show what a time of trial it was.

A little before the time that Jewel arrived at Frankfort, those occurrences among the English exiles were brought to a conclusion, which have obtained a painful celebrity as the "Troubles at Frankfort." A large number of refugees had settled at that place the year before, and had obtained permission from the magistrates to make use of a church which had been assigned to the French Protestants, alternately with the French

congregation. The magistrates stipulated, in order to prevent disputes, that they should conform to the confession of faith of the French, and in general to their usages also, to which the English agreed at first, apparently without considering what important principles were involved in such a step. For, in fact, if each separate congregation of a national Church was to be at liberty to remodel its doctrine and discipline according to its own pleasure, there would be an end of the principle on which the English Reformation had been conducted, as the act of a national Church under the authority of its civil and ecclesiastical rulers. But the Frankfort exiles, not considering this, and looking upon all that was opposed to popery with equal indulgence, agreed not only to abandon the use of the surplice, but to give up making the responses aloud, and to omit the whole of the litany, which was objected to, for no other reason, than that which ought to be its chief recommendation, that this precious portion of the service had been received from primitive times, with but little variation, even in the Church of Rome. They then sent to invite their brethren at Strasbourg, Zurich, and elsewhere, who perhaps had not obtained the privilege of a church for public worship, to join them at Frankfort and partake of the advantages they enjoyed. The Strasbourg exiles, who were men of more learning, proposed that Bishop Scorey, who was then at Emden, and was the only bishop of their party, for Coverdale probably had not yet been liberated, should undertake the charge of this Church; but before his answer arrived, John Knox had come from Geneva with some others of like sentiments, and had been elected by those at Frankfort as their minister. Those at Zurich were disposed to join them, but only on condition that the whole of the English service was retained, and they sent Mr. Chambers, the benevolent layman already mentioned as promoting good deeds in King Edward's time, to arrange matters on their behalf. Grindal also was sent from Strasbourg for the same purpose, with a letter

signed by many influential names, setting forth the importance of adhering to the liturgy of the national Church. If this principle could be admitted, they were willing to acquiesce in some changes in minor points, but after many discussions and fruitless consultations, the congregation at Frankfort resolved that the English liturgy should be translated into Latin and sent to Calvin for his opinion. Not content with this, they sent at the same time a letter pointing out their own objections, in which they complained of the Angels' Hymn in the communion service, "Glory to God in the highest," as *popish*, though, in fact, it is found in all the primitive liturgies, besides being taken from the word of God; and then they added that they concealed some other blemishes *out of shame and pity*. Calvin's answer was such as they probably anticipated, that the English liturgy contained "*tolerable weaknesses*[1]," which ought to be endured no longer than the necessity of the case required. Knox and his party, one of whom was John Foxe, "the martyrologist," now proposed to adopt the Geneva service, but this not being relished, a compromise was made and a form was adopted partly from Calvin, partly from the English Prayer Book, which both parties pledged themselves to observe. So matters rested until the arrival at Frankfort of Dr. Cox, King Edward's tutor, with some others of similar opinions with himself, who came there in March, 1555, for the express purpose of bringing about a better state of things. Cox was a man of great learning, who would at once perceive the importance of the principle involved in these concessions, and the dangerous consequences of them to the national Church if ever the Reformation should be restored in England. He may be supposed to have had a personal attachment to that system which

[1] *Tolerabiles ineptias.* The word "fooleries," by which this is sometimes translated, seems somewhat more severe than the original.

had been established under his royal pupil, and it would be so much the dearer to him when many of its promoters were called to shed their life's blood in the cause. And as he was not bound to any agreement to which he was no party, so he thought himself entitled to assume that in every English congregation the English Liturgy would be used. When, therefore, he and his friends went to church, the whole party said the responses aloud according to the rubric, and one of them the Sunday after read the litany from the pulpit. Upon this, Knox preached a sermon the same afternoon, in which he declaimed violently against the whole Liturgy, and declared that one cause of the present afflictions of the English Church were the half measures taken in its Reformation. The whole question was thus re-opened, and some proposed that Cox and his friends should not be allowed to vote upon the question, as not being members of the congregation. It is to the credit of Knox that this proposal was overruled by him. But the result was, that the arguments of the new comers were so successful, and they had the reason of the matter so much on their side, that in a short time they obtained a majority, who dismissed Knox from his office as their minister. The minority appealed to the senate of the city, and after some fruitless attempts at reconciliation, the whole congregation had orders to conform to the discipline and services of the French Protestants, under pain of their church being closed. Cox, upon this, advised them to submit, but as the minority under Knox had frustrated the decision of the majority by unfairly appealing to the magistrates, the other party were tempted to forget the maxim which would enjoin them to overcome evil with good. They thought themselves justified in informing the magistrates as to the former conduct of the person who had been mainly instrumental in disturbing the harmony of their church; with which view they shewed a book which Knox had published, containing among other things, a sermon preached by him in Buckinghamshire against the queen's

marriage, in which he had said that the emperor, the father of her intended husband, "was no less enemy to Christ than was Nero." The author of such sentiments could not be tolerated in a city subject to the emperor; and Knox received an intimation to quit the place, upon which he retired to Geneva, and was joined there by Foxe and others of his party. The heart-burnings engendered in these disputes, had afterwards a most fatal effect, as we shall see, upon the Church at home. Yet it is worthy of remark, as showing the opinion of one who had the best means of judging at the time, that Grindal wrote to Ridley soon afterwards from Frankfort, entirely approving of what Cox had done. His words are, "Here is a Church now well settled, (God be thanked) by the prudency of Master Cox and other which met here for that purpose, who most earnestly and unceasingly do cry unto God for the delivery of his Church[1]." This letter was written on the 6th of May, and it was on the 26th of March preceding, (1555,) that Knox had been obliged to leave the place. So that Grindal, whose own opinions were so moderate, that he was afterwards accused of favouring the opposite party, must have known the whole transaction and decidedly approved of it.

It is not to be denied that some zealots at home gave the government cause for complaint, and afforded some sort of excuse for severity. The insurrection of Wyatt, who himself seems to have professed the reformed faith[2], and such sermons as that of Knox just mentioned, were represented as such things usually are at the time, as if they were the general sentiments of the party. So was the wild and wicked advice of a person named Thomas, who had formerly written a violent book under the title of *Pelerine Inglese*, and who now proposed to assassinate the queen, and being taken up stabbed himself in prison.

---

[1] *Martyrs' Letters*, p. 51. Black letter edition.

[2] Lady Wyatt, probably his widow, was among those who contributed to the relief of the martyrs in prison.

Afterwards, when the bitterness of the persecution had goaded the minds of the people, a priest was wounded at the altar, and two Observant friars, the very same men who preached against Henry's marriage with Anne Boleyn, Elstow and Peyto, were pelted as they went to Greenwich, where the queen had re-established their house, which had sometimes been the scene of her mother's devotions. Such things require to be mentioned, the rather because they were assiduously collected afterwards by the opposite party, as if in justification of the severities that were exercised, whereas, in fact, many of them did not take place till the worst of those severities had been perpetrated, and certainly were not sanctioned by the leaders of the party; who were so far from justifying Wyatt's rebellion, that when he set open the prison doors of the Marshalsea, none of those committed on the charge of heresy, would avail themselves of it to escape. Another charge which has been brought against them is altogether unfounded. While these horrors were going on, in the first year after the queen's marriage, there was a very general belief, in which she herself participated, that she was about to have an heir to the throne. It went so far, that public prayers were ordered for her safe delivery, and in more than one instance, at Norwich, and at one church in London, on a false report that a prince was born, Te Deum was solemnly sung on the occasion. Foxe, who wrote soon after, in the reign of Elizabeth, at a time when people's minds were maddened by the cruelties that had been exercised against their friends, indulged in some sallies of unmanly exultation and ridicule on this affair, which cannot be sufficiently blamed, and which have afforded an opportunity to the other side of pointing to such things as if they were the usual sentiments and common language of his party. Yet, so far was this from being the case, that when Ridley had reason to believe that his own death was deferred till after the queen's confinement, he wrote to Grindal, that after that event, "which we daily expect,

and have now some time expected, (*and may God vouchsafe for the glory of his name to give her a prosperous time!*) we look for nothing else than to receive the crown of our confession in the Lord."

A short time after the execution of Latimer and Ridley, Bishop Gardiner died. There is no reason to believe a story that has been told of his having waited dinner till he heard of their death, and having been seized with mortal illness while at table. This story is inconsistent with other facts. And what we know of his death, would rather incline us to hope that he began to repent of what he had been doing. It is said that Bonner also was reluctant to proceed: but if this was so, his wishes were soon overruled, and the littleness of his character rendered his cruelty the more revolting. Philpot, archdeacon of Winchester, was long detained by him in prison at his palace near St. Paul's, and he often argued with him, and almost always lost his temper and descended to low personalities. At length he condemned him to the stake, and his execution, which took place in Smithfield on the 18th of December, concluded the horrors of this year, during which sixty-seven persons had been burnt, of whom were four bishops and thirteen priests.

CHAPTER XXIV.

FALL AND DEATH OF CRANMER. DEATH OF QUEEN MARY.

> To God the fruits of sorrow
> His broken heart had giv'n,
> And he rose upon that morrow,
> Strong in the strength of heaven.
> CHURTON'S *Lays of Faith and Loyalty.*

CRANMER had remained in prison from the time of his examination in September, but in February, 1556, a commission arrived from the Pope to proceed to a final sentence against him. In the mean time many endeavours had been made to bring him back to the Church of Rome, and the history of the steps by which this was at last, for a time, accomplished, will always remain in some degree of mystery. It appears that some hope was conceived of his fortitude having given way on the execution of Ridley and Latimer, and that he soon after expressed a wish to have an interview with Pole. There is also reason to believe that many of the most powerful of the Protestant nobility were urgent for his pardon, and it is said that Pole himself had begged his life of the queen if he would recant. It seems probable that the knowledge of such powerful intercession may have induced him to set his hand to some declarations, in which he did not retract his former religious opinions but which contained a submission to the will of the king and queen, and an acknowledgment of the Pope as supreme head of the Church of England, in deference to their will. This was only in accordance with his well-known sentiments, as to the duty of submission to the ruling powers, and he was willing probably to try how far

such submission, coupled with a declaration that he would be ruled, as to his book upon the sacrament, by the judgment of the Catholic Church, and of the next general council, might avail to save his life. Three papers to this effect were certainly signed by him before the 14th of February; but they were not deemed sufficient, and as he would not go any further in his submission, nor retract his opinion and submit to the doctrine of the then Church of Rome, it seems to have been determined that the law should take its course. He was therefore on that day brought before Thirlby, bishop of Ely, and Bonner, who sat as the papal delegates in the choir of the cathedral of Christchurch. The conduct of Bonner on this occasion is such an exhibition of unmanly insult and mean tyranny as must have shamed those whose misfortune it was to employ such a person in their service. To say nothing of better motives, a sense of his own dignity should have withheld him from insulting a fallen man at such a moment. Thirlby, on the contrary, was deeply affected, and declared with tears, that if it had not been for the king and queen's command, no worldly advantage would have induced him to undertake such an office. To him Cranmer delivered an appeal from the sentence of the Pope to the next general council, in which he declared that his intention was "to speak nothing against one Holy, Catholic, and Apostolical Church, or the authority thereof;" but having set forth that "a holy general council, lawfully gathered together in the Holy Ghost, is above the Pope, especially in matters concerning faith," he proceeded to show the injustice of the proceedings against himself, the evils that had arisen in England from the Pope's usurped authority, with the reasons why he would not acknowledge that authority, contrasting the later corruptions of the See of Rome with its ancient purity and holiness, and concluded by appealing from his decision to "a free general council held in a sure place." Here was, however, a departure from some part of those sub-

missions which he had made, in which he agreed to acknowledge the Pope, and perhaps it may have been on this account that his adversaries accused him of insincerity, and alleged it as a ground for proceeding to extremities against him. Be this as it may, it is probable that from the time of his degradation his doom was fixed; for whatever hesitation there may have been as to his death before that event, a recantation after definitive sentence was not held sufficient, according to papal laws, to entitle the penitent to a pardon. And if they were incensed against him for renouncing the Pope in his appeal after having consented to acknowledge him, this may have been the reason why Pole no longer interceded for him, but is even said to have advised his execution.

But we now arrive at a still more intricate part of this affair. Only two days after he had delivered this appeal at his degradation, namely, on the 16th of February, he exhibited to Bonner a fourth paper, written and signed by himself, in which, without saying anything about the Pope, he asserted his steadfast belief in "all the articles of the Christian religion and Catholic faith, as the Catholic Church doth believe, and hath believed from the beginning." Nothing could be more natural than that Bonner should visit him after his degradation, and remonstrate with him for having receded from his late subscription to the Pope's authority, upon which it was equally natural that Cranmer should protest, as he had indeed always protested, that he did not intend to separate from, or renounce the Catholic Church, and being required to give that sentiment in writing, he of course would do so. But he had permitted himself, as he afterwards acknowledged and lamented, to be seduced with the hopes of life. It was natural he should have done so, when he had such good reason to expect it from the intervention of his friends. And now that these attempts had failed, and he found himself condemned notwithstanding, he was the more open to the temptation to make a more desperate effort.

But near a month intervened, during which time he would be plied with all those arguments which might best suit his case, and to a man of his moderate sentiments, who had always maintained the authority of the Catholic Church, and who placed his rejection of the papal supremacy only on the necessity of the case, it was the more easy to suggest that he ought not to put his individual opinion in competition with that which professed to be the collective voice of Christendom. During this interval also he was treated with a degree of kindness which had not before been shown him. He was removed from prison to the lodgings of the Dean of Christchurch, and such treatment was peculiarly apt to operate upon his gentle character. But whatever the arguments may have been by which it was brought about, thus much is certain, that before the 12th of March[1] he had signed a paper, in the presence of Villagarcia and another person, which amounted to a most full and absolute recantation. He anathematised the heresy of Luther and Zwingle, acknowledging one only church, of which the Pope is head, the Vicar of Christ, to whom all the faithful must submit themselves; admitted transubstantiation, seven sacraments, purgatory and prayers to saints, and acknowledged that he agreed in all things with the belief of the "Catholic and Roman Church."

It is certain, from his own assertion, that he made this confession with the hope that it might yet avail to save his life; and there is reason to believe that his friends at court once more interceded for him, and were severely rebuked for doing so; but it seems to have been resolved to turn his recantation to account, by extorting from him a still more ample act of self-condemnation. On the 18th of March, a tract was printed by Bonner's authority, but immediately suppressed,

[1] The paper is without date; but Mr. Churton has shown from the despatch of Noailles to his court, announcing the fact, that it must have been before that date.

professing to give an account of all the submissions and recantations of Thomas, late archbishop of Canterbury. This tract contained not only the five papers already mentioned, including the last recantation, but two more; the one purporting to be a still more ample recantation, in which he especially lamented his sin in the divorce of Catharine, and the other a dying speech. As this tract was printed three days before his death, and contained words which he did not deliver, it is clear that his enemies must have arranged the whole matter beforehand, and that this represents what they wished and intended he should say. The sixth paper is in Latin, as the recantation also was, and it is therefore probable that it was drawn up by one of the Spanish ecclesiastics, who would naturally insert the national offence in the matter of the divorce. But it seems to have been intended as the groundwork of a dying speech, such as the seventh paper actually was; and it can therefore hardly be doubted, that Cranmer being now informed that his doom was fixed, was required to prepare a confession to be publicly made before he died, grounded perhaps upon this paper, and that he drew out himself that pathetic and eloquent lamentation, only with a different conclusion, which being transmitted to London was sent to the press by Bonner, without waiting for the news of his death[1].

Matters being thus arranged, the Lord Williams came to Oxford on Saturday, the 21st of March, with some other noblemen and magistrates, and Cranmer was brought from prison to St. Mary's Church, no longer dressed as a bishop, but clothed in mean attire as a poor civilian. There was a vast concourse, for those of the Romish side were expecting the triumph of their opinions, while those of opposite sentiments would not believe that he whom they had thought the

[1] For the grounds on which this view of the recantation is founded, and for the authorities for the same, see again Archdeacon Churton's *Papers on the Marian Persecution*, as before referred to.

champion of their cause, would desert that cause now at his last extremity. After a sermon from Dr. Cole, not unmixed with some dash of kindness, as far as there could be kindness in such courses, the archbishop was called upon "to express the true and undoubted profession of his faith, that all might see he was a Catholic indeed." He had been placed upon a platform opposite the pulpit, slightly raised above the people, and during the sermon he wept so bitterly that all hearts were moved to see an old man's tears, and such a man's, flowing from him as from a child. "Good people," he said, "I had intended to desire you to pray for me, which because Mr. Doctor hath desired and you have done already, I thank you most heartily for it, and now will I pray for myself, as I could best devise for my own comfort." He then read a prayer as he stood, and afterwards kneeled down and said the Lord's prayer, the whole assembly with one impulse kneeling and joining in it aloud. And then he proceeded to read his dying speech. He exhorted all to set their minds above this world, upon God, and the world to come; to obey the king and the queen; to study brotherly love, and the rich to remember the account they shall give of their riches. He next recited the Apostles' Creed, emphatically declaring that he believed the whole faith of the Catholic Church, and then he said he came to that great thing that so much troubled his conscience above everything he did or said in his life past. It was here intended that he should express his sorrow for having written against the faith of the Church of Rome; and such was the tenor of the speech printed by Bonner, and which he was now expected to deliver. But so far from doing so he proceeded thus. "And that is the setting abroad of writings contrary to the truth which I thought in my heart, and written for fear of death, and to save my life if it might be, and that is all such bills and papers which I have written or signed with my hand since my degradation, wherein I have written many things untrue. And forasmuch as

my hand offended, writing contrary to my heart, my hand shall first be punished therefore, for may I come to the fire it shall first be burned. And as for the Pope, I refuse him as Christ's enemy and Antichrist, with all his false doctrine. And as for the Sacrament, I believe as I have taught in my book against the Bishop of Winchester, the which my book teacheth so true a doctrine of the Sacrament, that it shall stand at the last day before the judgment of God, when the papistical doctrine, contrary thereto, shall be ashamed to show his face." He could scarce finish reading for the interruptions with which he was assailed, and they began to accuse him of falsehood and dissembling. But he answered, "Ah, my masters, do not take it so. Always since I lived, I have been a hater of falsehood and a lover of simplicity, and never before this time have I dissembled;" then he wept again bitterly. He attempted further speech, but his voice was drowned with hootings, and they hurried him away to the spot where his happier associates had witnessed their good confession. On this spot he knelt for a short time in prayer, and then undressed for the stake. His shirt was made long, down to his feet, which were bare, and when his cap was off, his head was seen without a single hair, while we are told that his beard, which he had suffered to grow ever since the death of Henry VIII., "covered his face with marvellous gravity." When the fire was lighted, he extended his arm and thrust his right hand into the flame, which he held there without flinching, except that he raised it once to wipe the death-drops from his brow, exclaiming often, *This unworthy right hand.* His last were, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."

Cardinal Pole was consecrated as Archbishop of Canterbury the day after Cranmer's death. But he does not seem to have exercised so much influence in affairs connected with religion as might have been expected. That he was personally amiable has never been denied,

and there is preserved a letter of his written from Canterbury which indicates an affectionate interest in his episcopal functions. He thanks his friend for enquiring after his health, and says that it would especially grieve him to be sick now that he was amongst his flock. Once he interfered to save three out of sixteen persons whom Bonner had condemned together to the stake, yet on other occasions he permitted the fury of persecution to rage unrestrained. A man and four women were burnt at Canterbury by order of Harpsfield and Thornden a short time before he became archbishop. This perhaps he could not help: but the same can hardly be said when six men were burnt in one fire in the same place in the January following, and fourteen persons in two days in June of the same year, 1557. Perhaps his Italian notions might lead him to think it necessary to permit these cruelties. But his situation both as regards the Pope and the queen was one of great difficulty. The Pope was his personal enemy, and endeavoured to supersede him as legate, by creating Peyto, the friar of Greenwich, a cardinal, and sending him legatine powers with his nomination to the bishopric of Salisbury. The queen refused to admit his legatine authority, and Pole being thus beholden to her, was the less able to oppose the influence of Carranza, the secret agent in these scenes of blood.

The queen now proceeded to establish as far as she could all those parts of the ancient religion which had been broken down. The houses of the Franciscan and Dominican Friars were restored at Greenwich and in Smithfield, and the nunneries of Sheen and Sion. The new bishopric of Westminster having been suppressed, the monks were reinstated, and the deanery converted into a foundation for the abbot. Not long after, the house of St. John of Jerusalem was also restored, and Sir Thomas Tresham was made Grand Prior of England. Nor was this confined to England: for the

Grand Prior of Ireland was also reinstated at Kilmainham[1]. For these and similar purposes, the queen deprived herself of all the church property remaining in the crown, and that at a time when her necessities were urgent. Encouragement was also given to those who should choose to give lands for such purposes, and a few chantries were founded for masses for the dead. Attempts were made to restore the discipline of the Church. These attempts were praiseworthy, so long as they were confined to the correction of notorious offenders, however doubtful it may be whether any religious discipline can be truly corrective of vice which shall not be voluntary. But some parts of this discipline were calculated to bring the censures of the Church into contempt.

It is an odious task to trace the course of persecution throughout these awful times; and some of the occurrences that took place are almost too horrible to mention[2]. In the year before the queen died, seventy-nine persons were burnt, and the same spirit continued to the last, so that Harpsfield is said to have hastened the death of three men and two women at Canterbury who suffered on the 10th of November, 1558, only a week before her death, lest that event should stop the persecution. A kind of inquisition was established, to carry on the investigation into the opinions of all persons who did not come to church; and the sheriff of Hampshire having ventured to stop the execution of a victim who recanted at the stake, was severely reprimanded, and was ordered first to bring the culprit to the fire, and then to come up to London to answer for

---

[1] Sir James Ware, *Annales Hiberniæ*. It would seem from what Sir James Ware says as if Pole had gone over to Ireland for the purpose. But there does not appear to be any ground for thinking so.

[2] Such as the horrors perpetrated at the island of Guernsey of which an authentic record was preserved in the reign of Queen Elizabeth.

his own presumption. The total number of sufferers recorded by Foxe is two hundred and eighty-four, besides about sixty who died in prison; of these there were five bishops, twenty-one clergymen, eight gentlemen, eighty-four artificers, one hundred husbandmen, servants and labourers, twenty-six married women, twenty widows, nine unmarried women, two boys and two infants. But another account, said to be given on the authority of Archbishop Grindal, stated the number at eight hundred. Yet it is gratifying to know that the principal part of these horrors was confined to a few dioceses. The northern parts of England were almost wholly exempt from them, and in the diocese of Durham especially Tonstal did not permit a single prosecution to take place. In that of Worcester also, Bishop Pates, who had been restored after having quitted the country in the time of Henry VIII., is said to have expressed the following noble sentiments to a physician whom he sent for, and whom he knew to be a protestant. Seeing him betray some alarm on being sent for to him, he said: "I am not ignorant what your religious sentiments are. But never fear: for I am resolved not to injure or punish any one on account of the faith, which does not propagate itself by force and terror, but by the influence and persuasions of reason[1]."

In the midst of the trials to which they were exposed, there were not wanting those who continued to exercise in secret the services of the reformed religion. A clergyman named John Rough, had a congregation at Islington, to whom he administered the rites of the Church of England according to the Liturgy of King Edward; but he was taken and condemned to the flames. Two other clergymen who were afterwards respectively bishops of Peterborough and Litchfield

---

[1] Godwin, *De Præsul.* Bishop Godwin tells this story on the authority of his own father, who was the physician referred to.

under Queen Elizabeth, Scambler and Bentham, continued their ministrations undiscovered, and Harley, bishop of Hereford, one of those two of King Edward's bishops who attempted to take their seats in the House of Lords in the beginning of this reign, "instructed his flocks in woods and secret places, as a faithful and holy shepherd, preaching to them and administering the sacraments, and for this purpose lurking up and down in England, at last died like an exile in his own country[1]." But these terrors were to have an end. The queen's health had been failing for some time, and her distress of mind arising from the coldness and frequent absence of her husband, was augmented by her mortification on the loss of Calais, which had been the possession of England for above two hundred years, and was taken by the French in January, 1558, because through the mismanagement of her government and their jealousy of Philip, they had left Lord Wentworth, the governor, with no more than five hundred soldiers, for its defence in a time of war. Towards the latter end of the same year reports were frequent that her life could not be much longer continued, and the hopes of the nation were directed to the Princess Elizabeth, whose inclinations as well as her interest were on the side of reformation. There was a gentleman of Shropshire, Edward Burton of Longnor, who was strongly attached to the reformed doctrine. He had been compelled to hide himself frequently for fear of being called to account for his religion, the exercise of which he had privately continued at his own house throughout these dangerous times. He was an aged man, but his feelings were alive to the miseries of his country, and to the afflictions of the Church. The reports of the queen's illness had reached his residence near Shrewsbury, when one morning the church bells of St. Chad's were heard to ring merrily, and he thought it possible

[1] WARTON, *Harmer*, p. 144.

these sounds might announce the accession of Elizabeth to the throne. His son undertook to go to Shrewsbury to learn the news; and as the road by which he would return passed in front of the house on the opposite side of the Severn, to reach the bridge below, it was agreed that if the surmise should prove correct, he should wave a handkerchief as he passed to signify it to his father. The old man watched for his return, and saw the signal; it told of returning peace and liberty not to himself only, but to his country and his religion; and he went into his house, breathed his nunc dimittis, and laid him down and died. They buried him in his garden, because it was not yet lawful to bury a "heretic" in a churchyard, and his epitaph, preserved by his descendants, who have continued at the same place[1], relates the incident, and why he was like his Saviour in his place of sepulture.

The queen's death took place on the 17th of November, 1558, and Cardinal Pole, who had been ill some time, died a few hours after. It is instructive to follow out the history of another agent in these miserable persecutions, her confessor Carranza already mentioned. He was a man of great distinction in his own country, and one of the divines sent from Spain to the Council of Trent. He was firmly attached to the Church of Rome, as Pole was, with whom, during his residence in England, he formed a great intimacy. He had preached at many executions of heretics in Spain; and he was not slack in the same kind of occupation while he resided in England. But he was not quite bad enough for the spirits of his own party. He was learned, and had been captivated in his youth with the writings of Erasmus. He thought that terror was a good instrument to maintain unity, but instruction a better. He was

[1] It is believed that the late Dr. Edward Burton, the lamented Regius Professor of Divinity at Oxford, was a descendant of this gentleman.

employed in England in preparing a catechism in the Spanish language, to give a little knowledge to the people; and he thought that all ought to be allowed to read the Scriptures. This was enough to raise a host of enemies against him. He was, however, promoted by Philip, in 1559, to the dignity of primate of Spain; and he came into his province, and was shortly after summoned to the death-bed of Charles V. When he came he found the emperor near his end: holding in his hand a crucifix, and falling on his knees by his bedside, he said, "Let your majesty be of good comfort; sin has no more power—the death of Jesus Christ has blotted out all that was against you—all is pardoned." A monk of the order of St. Jerome, who was in the apartment, noted down his words, and cited others who were present as witnesses. It was considered that he had by these words intended to express his contempt for the sacrament of confession, since he had given the emperor absolution before he had confessed him. He was accused to the Inquisition, seized, and imprisoned; and passed the remainder of his life, sixteen long years, a prisoner, first at Valladolid, and afterwards at Rome[1]. At length he was made to abjure Lutheran tenets as if they were his own, though he had never held them, and after the most abject submissions and protracted sufferings, he died a short time before he was to have been liberated, the victim of that ruthless system of which he had been the too willing agent. Who would not rather have died like Cranmer? Carranza declared upon his death-bed, that he had done everything that he did in England by order of the king his master[2].

[1] Llorente, *Hist. of the Inquisition.*
[2] *British Magazine, loco citato.*

CHAPTER XXV.

QUEEN ELIZABETH. RESTORATION OF THE REFORMED RELIGION.

> The city, which thou seest, no other deem
> Than great and glorious Rome, queen of the earth,
> With gilded battlements conspicuous far,
> Turrets, and terraces, and glittering spires.
> All nations now to Rome obedience pay,
> To Rome's great emp'ror—these two thrones except.
>
> *Paradise Regained.*

THE Princess Elizabeth was twenty-five years of age when she succeeded her sister, A.D. 1558. The hopes of the people had long been turned towards her; and public sympathy was excited, when they knew that she had been in danger from accusers, and when it was perceived that the jealousy of Mary had kept her often in restraint, and, as far as possible, out of public view[1]. It is said that on entering the Tower as queen, where she had before been a prisoner, she expressed her thankfulness to God for the preservation of her life during her sister's reign; and on her way to her coronation, she confirmed the favourable impression of her character, by receiving with an appearance of satisfaction an English Bible which was lowered from a triumphal arch as she passed, and pressing it to her bosom. The Marian bishops were unwilling to recognise her title, and although she consented to be crowned according to the rites of the Church of Rome, which was then the religion of the country, there was but one of them, Oglethorpe, bishop of Carlisle,

---

[1] NOAILLES, v. 85.

who could be induced to perform the ceremony. And her position as regards the Roman see was rendered still more precarious, when the pope, Paul IV., refused to recognise her as Queen of England, declaring that the British Crown was a fief of the popedom, and that it was high presumption in her to assume it without his consent.

Elizabeth proceeded with that sagacity in the choice of her ministers, and that resolution in the accomplishment of her purposes, which have rendered her reign remarkable. She gave her chief confidence to Sir William Cecil, and Sir Nicholas Bacon, the first of whom became her Secretary of State, and the other, Lord Keeper, in the room of Heath, archbishop of York, who resigned the post of Lord Chancellor. She took the advice of Cecil, as to the best mode of proceeding in the restoration of the reformed religion, and his answers shew that his sagacious mind was able to foresee every one of those obstacles with which she had afterwards to contend; the sentence of excommunication and deposition by the Pope, the hostility of foreign sovereigns, the opposition of the Marian bishops, the inclinations of a party at home, and the violence of another party, who would desire to carry the Reformation to unreasonable lengths. But Cecil hoped that these obstacles would be overcome; and measures were taken accordingly.

The parliament was called in January, 1559. and a proclamation had been previously issued, similar to those which had been put forth both by Edward and Mary, to put a stop to all preaching for a time, but allowing the litany, and the epistle and gospel in English, as they had been in the time of their father. This was a significant indication of the intentions of the queen. But as the clergy were not yet brought again under those restrictions upon their deliberations in convocation which Henry VIII. had imposed, they were no sooner assembled with the parliament than they resolved to anticipate the measures of the court by a solemn

declaration of their adherence to the Roman doctrine. They therefore passed resolutions, in which they declared their belief in transubstantiation, and maintained that the clergy alone have authority to determine points of faith. Harpsfield was prolocutor of the lower house of convocation, and he delivered these articles to Bonner, to be presented by him to the Lord Keeper. But the only result was, that a disputation was appointed to take place in Westminster Abbey between the bishops and others of their party, and certain of the most eminent divines holding the reformed opinions. The points to be discussed were three. "Whether it is against the word of God and the custom of the ancient Church, to officiate and administer the sacraments in a language unknown to the people? Whether every Church has authority to appoint, change, and set aside ceremonies and ecclesiastical rites, provided it be done to edification? And, whether it can be proved, by the word of God, that there is offered in the mass a propitiatory sacrifice for the quick and dead?" The disputation was to begin on the last day of March; four bishops, and four other divines, of whom Harpsfield was one, being appointed on the Roman Catholic side; and on that of the Reformation, Scorey, late bishop of Chichester, with seven others, among whom were Cox, Horne, Aylmer, and Grindal, names already distinguished, and Jewel, who soon became more eminent than any of them. The Romish bishops could hardly have refused, in any case, to defend their doctrine when thus challenged; but their present position made it impossible to do so. They owed the situation which they occupied, to the violent and arbitrary proceedings of the late reign, by which the Reformed Church of England had been subverted, its prelates removed by banishment or by a violent death, and the doctrine and supremacy of Rome restored by foreign influence, even though by the forms of law. Whatever, therefore, had been done in the late reign by the parliament and the government for restoring the papal supremacy and the creed of modern Rome,

the same means might now be taken for reverting to the system which had previously been established. But they were not willing to submit their doctrine to public disputation, and, therefore, though they accepted the challenge, they would not adhere to the terms on which they had at first agreed that it should be conducted. Being rebuked for this non-compliance by the Lord Keeper, who presided, the bishops of Winchester and Lincoln threatened to excommunicate the queen, for which they were committed to the Tower, and the conference ended greatly to the disadvantage of the Romish party. Before this conference took place, though not before the convocation had passed the resolutions out of which it arose, the parliament had passed an act for restoring the royal supremacy and the other laws of Henry VIII. and Edward VI. which depended upon it. The measures of the late reign had been so unpopular, and the cruelties by which they were enforced had so alienated people's mind from the government of Queen Mary, that no less than sixty-five members of the House of Commons had absented themselves during her two last parliaments. It was not, therefore, surprising that the parliament of Elizabeth should willingly revert to the previous state of things. By this law the queen was declared to be Supreme Governor of the Church, very properly declining the appellation of its Head, as a term belonging only to our Saviour. But it would have been well if she had shown equal moderation in the kind of government she intended to exercise over the Church. It is most true that the kings of England are supreme in their own dominions over all persons and causes, ecclesiastical as well as civil; so that the pretence of the Pope with his clergy to make laws relating to religion without consulting the laws of the land, is a most unjustifiable usurpation. But Elizabeth attempted to affix a further meaning to this supremacy. It was enacted that she should have power to appoint commissioners for an indefinite period and with indefinite powers to execute all manner of jurisdiction

in Church affairs; and we shall have occasion to observe the ill effects resulting from the manner in which this power was executed. The archbishop of York and the bishop of Chester spoke against passing the bill; and though they were clearly in the wrong in maintaining the papal supremacy, it must be confessed that the strongest part of their argument was derived from the fact, that such a measure seemed to make the kings of England a sort of spiritual governors, to which both the puritans and the Romanists equally objected, and which the Church of England has never acknowledged.

Another law which encountered much opposition from the Romish bishops, and not without reason, was that which gave back to the crown the impropriate rectories which Mary had restored to the Church; and authorised the queen to give them in exchange to the bishops and take their lands to her own use, on every vacancy of a see. But that to which they were chiefly opposed was the Act of Uniformity, for restoring the Liturgy of King Edward and enforcing its observance. It has been constantly objected to the Reformed Church of England, that it is a religion by act of parliament, because its liturgy was sanctioned by law. But no imputation can be more unjust in the sense in which it is intended. If the parliament had now assumed the functions of a synod, and had put forth a liturgy of its own, the accusation would have been just. But the Liturgy of Edward VI. had been adopted equally by the convocation and parliament, forming together the great national council of a national Church. This Church had awaited in vain a general reformation which all Christendom had for two centuries desired; and when at length, in despair of universal concurrence, the whole realm of England had resolved to take measures for the reformation of their own Church, the reformation thus accomplished had been overthrown by violence. There are occasions, and this was one, which are a rule by themselves; and if ever a people and a government were justified in a national act, they were justified in

resolving at once to restore a form of worship and a system of church government, now doubly dear to them for the sake of those who had given their life's blood in its cause. Commissioners had been appointed soon after the queen's accession, to consider whether any alterations should be made; and it was appointed that the words used in the delivery of the holy eucharist should be such as we now have them, embodying the two forms together which were in the two Liturgies of Edward VI. This was done in order to restore the words which declare the consecrated elements to be the body and blood of Christ; and a corresponding alteration was made when the Articles came to be reviewed, so as to admit the doctrine of a real presence. None of the bishops who remained could be induced to acquiesce in these measures, and the abbot of Westminster as well as the bishop of Chester, spoke strongly against them. But the law was passed in the end of April, and the Liturgy was ordered to come into use on St. John Baptist's day, June 24, 1559; but it was used in most places on Whit Sunday, nor have its sweet and holy services been ever since discontinued, except during one short and memorable period.

The first act of the royal supremacy was to issue Injunctions relative to religion similar to those of King Edward. But they differed in some particulars, where they were wisely modified to consult the feelings of the Romish party. Where stone altars had not yet been removed, it was stated to be "a matter of no great moment, saving for an uniformity, so that the sacrament be duly and reverently ministered." And while it was implied that they were better removed, it was ordered that it should not be done but by the oversight of the curate and churchwardens. Again, in the "Form of bidding the prayers" the queen's supremacy was thus moderately expressed by the words, "Supreme Governour of this realm, as well in causes ecclesiastical as civil." A general visitation was next appointed by royal authority, during the vacancy of the see of Can-

terbury, and the visitors were empowered to eject all those of the clergy who would not conform to the religion now restored. A more permanent commission was soon afterwards appointed by virtue of a clause for that purpose in the Act of Supremacy, and this became the famous High Commission Court, and afterwards the Court of Star Chamber. It has been objected to this commission that the powers which it granted to the commissioners were similar to those of the Inquisition which Philip II. attempted to establish in the Low Countries. It is too true that these powers were of an objectionable kind, but they were copied from a commission of Queen Mary, by whom the model attempted in the Low Countries by her husband was introduced into England.

The first business of these commissioners was to administer the oath of supremacy to the clergy, and require the observance of the Reformed Liturgy. As soon as the parliament was dissolved, the queen sent for the bishops and urged them to comply with the laws. The Archbishopric of Canterbury was vacant since the death of Cardinal Pole, and several other bishops having died about the same time, there remained at this time no more than fourteen bishops in possession of their sees. All of these had complied with Queen Mary's proceedings, though many of them had supported Henry VIII. in his opposition to the see of Rome, especially Heath, archbishop of York, Tonstal of Durham, and Thirlby of Ely. But Heath had been ejected for nonconformity under Edward, and Tonstal, who coincided with Cranmer in many of his views, had been unhappily forced into the opposite side to gratify the ambition of Northumberland, who coveted his lands. There were three bishops remaining alive who had been ejected under Mary; Coverdale of Exeter, Barlow, and Scorey, and a bill had been brought into parliament to restore them to their sees, but it was dropped, probably because the government then hoped to conciliate the Marian bishops. In this

expectation they were disappointed. The Archbishop of York answered for himself and his brethren, entreating the queen to observe the engagements which her sister had contracted with the see of Rome. Elizabeth replied that she and her subjects were resolved to be governed by the resolution of Joshua, that himself and his house would serve the Lord; that she had called her parliament together, in imitation of Josiah, to make a covenant with God, and not with the bishop of Rome; that it was not in her sister's power to bind her successors to an usurped authority; that her crown being wholly independent, she would own no sovereign except Jesus the King of kings; that the Pope's usurpation over princes was intolerable; and that she should look upon all her subjects, both clergy and lay, as enemies to God and the crown, who should from henceforth abet his pretensions.

The result was that all the bishops except one refused to comply, and were successively ejected from their sees, though much hope was entertained both of Heath and Tonstal, whose bishoprics were kept vacant for nearly two years. They were all treated with respect, and with a degree of moderation which contrasted favourably with the violence of the late reign. Bonner alone was imprisoned, of the rest a few retired abroad, but the greater part remained in England, residing either at their own houses or in the families of the newly appointed bishops. Tonstal lived and died at Lambeth, the honoured guest of Archbishop Parker, and Heath was sometimes visited by the queen at his own house at Cobham, in Surrey. They appear to have conformed to the Liturgy, and it is due to them to say, that they repaid the generosity with which they were treated, by never making any attempt to continue their episcopate, or to set up a rival succession in the English Church. Of the rest of the clergy, a considerable number of dignitaries were ejected; one abbot, four priors, and one abbess; twelve deans, fourteen archdeacons, and sixty prebendaries. But almost the whole body of

the parochial clergy conformed to the Reformation, for out of nine thousand four hundred livings then computed in England, not more than one hundred parish priests refused to comply. Those who were turned out had pensions assigned them proportioned to the value of their preferments. An offer was even made to Feckham, abbot of Westminster, that his abbey should remain if he and his monks would conform, but on their refusal it was converted into a Collegiate Church. The houses of the Knights of St. John were now also finally dissolved, both in London and at Kilmainham, in Ireland, where the last Grand Prior was attainted by Act of Parliament[1], for refusing to surrender, and thus the monastic life was banished from the kingdom.

Every thing that had yet been done had been done in a spirit of conciliation. The offensive petition to be delivered "from the Bishop of Rome and all his detestable enormities," had been omitted from the Litany, and every conciliation had been attempted that was consistent with the resolution to maintain the independence of the Church of England. And the general concurrence of the parochial clergy appears to indicate that they were satisfied on the whole. But the refusal of the bishops gave rise to a serious difficulty. No instance had occurred in the Church Catholic until the period of the Reformation, in which ordination had been conferred by any who were not bishops. And although the Lutheran and Genevan Churches had ventured to adopt the Presbyterian system, they had done it reluctantly, and as a matter of necessity, acknowledging their wish to retain episcopal government. But if all the bishops of the English Church had refused to concur in the Reformation, that Church might possibly have resorted to the same alternative. The opinions prevalent at that time among some of the reformers, render it not improbable that such a course would have been pursued. This is what seems to have been done in Denmark, and the

[1] Irish Statutes, 2 Eliz. c. 7 & 8. Sir James Ware, *An. Hiber.*

convention at Leith, by which bishops were allowed in the reformed Church of Scotland, appears to have acted upon these principles. But it is the happiness of the Church of England, and it seems to have been by the especial Providence of God, that she alone of all the Reformed Churches was not tempted to this course, and that while we have gained that pure faith which it is our blessing to inherit, we have not been deprived of the succession of our bishops, and of their apostolical commission from the original Church in England. It has been mentioned, that there were still alive three bishops of the reformed opinions who had been formerly in possession of sees, Coverdale, Scorey, and Barlow. There was also Bale, bishop of Ossory, and two suffragan bishops of Thetford and Bedford, besides Kitchen of Llandaff, who alone of those now in possession of their sees had complied with the law, but whose character rendered his compliance suspicious. The queen had made choice of Matthew Parker for the see of Canterbury, who had been chaplain to her mother, Ann Boleyn, a man of great learning and equal piety, of tried devotion to the cause of reformation, and of such modesty that he was only with the greatest reluctance and after long delay, persuaded to accept the office by the express command of the queen. At length on the 9th of December, 1559, he was consecrated at the chapel at Lambeth by Barlow, Scorey, and Coverdale, assisted by Hotchkins, the suffragan bishop of Bedford, and he soon after filled up the other sees, to which some of the most distinguished reformers were appointed; Grindal to London, Cox to Ely, Sandys to Worcester, and Jewel to Salisbury, while Barlow was translated from St. Asaph to Chester, and Scorey from Chester to Hereford. There was a foolish story invented some forty years afterwards, as if Archbishop Parker had not been duly consecrated. It was attributed to a chaplain of Bonner's, who said the new bishops dined together at the Nag's Head, in Fleet-street, and that he looked through the key-hole and saw Scorey lay a

bible upon the head of each, saying, "Take thou authority to preach the word of God;" upon which they were deemed to be bishops. This story was never heard of at the time, not even by Saunders who wrote most violently against the Reformation, and its falsehood was established by the testimony of a nobleman who had been present at the consecration of Parker, and who was yet alive when the story was told, as well as by the original records of that event which are still preserved, and in which the whole proceedings are minutely described.

It might have been hoped that bright days were now at hand, and that the Church which had passed through such trials, and which seemed to be restored by the especial Providence of God, would be permitted to enjoy in peace that pure form of worship which had been bought by so many sacrifices. And for a little while it seemed so; and amidst the conflict of opinions which so soon broke out again, we ought not to forget how many there have been ever since, unknown indeed and unrecorded, yet not less blessed, to whom the holy services of this Church have afforded peace in life and hope in death. It is a remarkable instance of the enthusiasm which prevailed in many places in favour of the Reformation, which Bishop Jewel mentioned in a letter to Bullinger, that he had seen five thousand people singing a psalm together at Paul's Cross. The practice of parochial psalmody does not seem to have made much progress in England, during the earlier time of the Reformation. The Lollards were so much opposed to the abuse of church music which they witnessed, that they would have banished it altogether. But the psalms were translated into English metre by Sternhold and Hopkins in the time of Edward, and the exiles who had adopted the practice from the example of the Reformed Churches abroad, now promoted it in every way. A complaint was made about this time to the queen's council, against the dean and chapter of Exeter, that they had hindered the people from assem-

bling to sing psalms in their cathedral before divine service. The morning prayer was then at six o'clock, and it appears that before that hour the church was thronged by the inhabitants, who came to join with some persons from London, who met there to sing psalms[1]. The council insisted that they should not be prevented, and it would have been well if the royal supremacy had never been exerted in any more offensive way. On the other hand, those whose inclinations or principles would have inclined them to adhere to the ancient services, had no notion as yet of forming separate congregations. They might disapprove of some things that were done, but they continued to come to church, and nothing is more certain than that the whole nation complied with the national religion for the first ten or twelve years after the accession of this queen. It remains to see by what means the separation which followed was brought about, which may be traced to three principal causes—the conduct of the papal court, the violence of the puritan party, and the mistaken notions of church government adopted by Queen Elizabeth.

[1] See the account of this in the *Concilia* of Wilkins.

CHAPTER XXVI.

CONDUCT OF THE PAPAL PARTY. CONDUCT OF THE PURITANS. HOOKER. CONCLUSION.

> But, dearest Mother, (what those miss)
> The mean, thy praise and glory is,
> And long may be!
> Blessed be God, whose love it was
> To double-moat thee with his grace,
> And none but thee.
>
> G. HERBERT'S *British Church.*

PAUL IV. was succeeded in the papal chair in August, 1559, by Pius IV., a prelate of energy and character, and of more moderation than his predecessor. In the following May he sent a letter to the queen by the hands of a legate, couched in terms of respect and affection, entreating her to return to the allegiance of the papal see. There is reason to believe that the nuncio was empowered to propose to the queen, that if she would abandon the supremacy and acknowledge the Pope, he would sanction the English liturgy, permit the sacrament to the English nation in both kinds, and confirm her mother's marriage. But Elizabeth had taken her part, and she resolved to abide by it. The nuncio, therefore, was sent back without having been permitted to land in England. And, indeed, there were many other points which must have been surrendered even if she had been able to obtain these terms. On the 26th of November, 1559, a sermon had been preached at Paul's Cross by Jewel, then bishop-elect of Salisbury, in which he openly challenged the papal party to defend twenty-seven tenets which he enumerated as then held by them; and he repeated the challenge before the court the following year. He declared

that "if they would bring any one sufficient sentence out of any old Catholic doctor, or father, or general council, or holy Scripture, or any one example in the primitive Church, whereby it may clearly and plainly be proved, during the first six hundred years," that any one of these tenets was held, "he should be content to yield and subscribe." The chief of them were as follows:— "That there was at any time any private mass in the world: or any communion ministered under one kind: or that the people had their common prayer in a strange tongue: or that the bishop of Rome was then called an universal bishop, or the head of the universal Church: or that the people were then taught to believe that Christ's body is really, substantially, corporeally, carnally, or naturally in the sacrament: or that the lay people were then forbidden to read the word of God in their own tongue: or that images were then set up in churches to the intent the people might worship them." This challenge was answered, among others, by Harding, who has been mentioned as having been severely rebuked by Lady Jane Gray for deserting the Reformation, of which he had been a violent advocate, within a week after Queen Mary's accession. He was now a divine of Louvain, and his answer caused Jewel to write his famous *Apology for the Church of England*, which was followed soon after by a longer treatise, entitled the *Defence of the Apology*. It may be regretted that the tone of this famous work was not of a more conciliatory character; but the language of the other party called for some severity. Harding asserted that the bishop of Rome is always infallible in his determinations; that he is under the constant direction of the Holy Spirit; that we are to learn God's pleasure from him; that he is the centre of unity, and the main support of the Church; that whoever separates from his communion is a heretic; and that there is no hope of salvation without submission to the apostolic see. The *Apology* was translated into Latin in 1562, and was put forth with the approbation of the queen and the bishops.

But in the meantime another attempt had been made by the papal party. The Pope had resolved to convene another session of the Council of Trent, and he again sent a conciliatory message to the queen, inviting her to send either bishops or ambassadors to the council. But this also was declined, partly on account of some rebellions in Ireland which the Pope's nuncio at that same moment fomented; but mainly on the ground that England was resolved to acknowledge no council that was called by the authority of the Pope. This was in 1561, and it was the last attempt at conciliatory measures made by the papal court. The French had induced the young Queen of Scots, who was married to their king, to lay claim to the throne of England, on the ground of Elizabeth being illegitimate; and they had urged the Pope to pass sentence against her of deposition and excommunication. To provide against such courses, a law was made in the parliament of 1562, called an "Act of Assurance of the Queen's Power," by which all persons in holy orders, lawyers, and civil officers were required to take the oath of supremacy; the first refusal of which should incur the *præmunire*, and the second should be high treason. But it was not to be offered the second time to any who had not been ecclesiastical persons, either in the reign of Mary or her two predecessors, unless they should refuse to observe the rites of the Church of England; and this law was not enforced except in extreme cases. For Archbishop Parker wrote to the suffragans of his province not to force the consciences of inoffensive persons by offering the oath without necessity, and when it was refused the first time, in no case to tender it the second, which involved the penalty of treason, without consulting him. Nor was it offered to any of the deprived bishops, excepting Bonner, who refused it. But the favourers of the Pope continued to come to church, and the government was chiefly occupied for some years in the contests with the Puritans, which had now arisen to an alarming height. At length, about the year 1567, it was found

that Harding and Saunders were going about England with authority from the Pope to absolve all those who should return to his communion; and a year later a discovery was made calculated to excite feelings of just indignation. Thomas Heath, a brother of the deprived archbishop of York, had obtained permission from the bishop of Rochester to preach in his cathedral, and took occasion to impugn the English Liturgy, as not being such prayers as are to be found in Scripture. But he dropped a letter in the pulpit by which it was discovered that he was a Jesuit in disguise, and was in correspondence with the leaders of that order in Spain, by whom he was employed to spread Puritan opinions in order to sow dissention in the Church of England. His lodgings were searched, and a license was found from the Jesuits, and a bull from the Pope, Pius V., authorising him to preach such doctrine as his superiors should enjoin, and several books were found in his possession against infant baptism, for the purpose of disseminating the tenets of the Anabaptists. Such were the first operations in England of that famous society, which had lately been founded by Ignatius Loyola, and such the crooked courses to which the Church of Rome was willing to resort in order to recover the grand idea of an universal Church. The punishment inflicted upon Heath was barbarous. But it ought to have been a warning to the Puritans, who were now rending the Church of England by their factions, to suspect their own principles when they were propagated by those whom they themselves rightly regarded as their bitterest enemies. And there is good reason to believe that this system was long carried on by the Jesuits. Near eighty years afterwards the British ambassador at the Hague gave intelligence to Archbishop Laud, that the Pope had given indulgences to the several fraternities of the Roman Catholic communion to educate young Englishmen in all manner of tenets contrary to those of the Church of England. He sent him the names of two who had lately come over, and he added that "above sixty Romish clergymen

were gone within two years out of the monasteries of the French king's dominions, to preach up the Scottish Covenant, and to spread the same about the northern parts of England[1]."

It was in great measure owing to the contrivances of the same party that a formidable rebellion broke out in the summer of 1569, headed by the earls of Northumberland and Westmoreland. The insurgents professed a design to restore the Roman Catholic religion, and one Morton, who took a leading part, was believed to be an emissary of the Pope, and to have instructions to declare the queen a heretic and her dominions forfeited. They marched to Durham, where they burnt the Bibles in the churches and set up the mass. But, however the people of those parts might stand affected, they did not join them in such numbers as was expected; so that the Roman Catholic party began to fear that in another generation their adherents would forget their attachment to the see of Rome. To prevent this, colleges were founded first at Douay, and then at Rome and elsewhere, for the education of English priests to preach up popery in England. Dr. William Allen was principal of the college at Douay, and Parsons, the Jesuit, of that at Rome, from which two places three hundred priests had been sent into England before the end of the reign of Queen Elizabeth. The zeal and self-devotion with which this object was prosecuted was worthy of a better cause.

But all these measures were incomplete, and would have been insufficient, had not the Pope confirmed them by his bull of excommunication and deposition against the queen and her adherents. This document bears date at Rome in the year 1570, and begins by declaring that He who reigns above hath consigned his one Holy Catholic Church, out of which there is no salvation, to

---

[1] Letter to Abp. Laud from Sir Wm. Boswell, ambassador at the Hague, 12 June, 1640. Abp. Usher's *Letters and Life*, by Parr, App. p. 27.

the sole government of St. Peter and his successor the bishop of Rome. By virtue of this authority, Pius V. proceeds to denounce Elizabeth, "the pretended queen of England," as a vassal of iniquity; and after enumerating her offences, he declares her a heretic and an encourager of heretics; that all who adhere to her are under anathema, and cut off from the unity of the body of Christ; also, that she is deprived of all pretended right to the kingdom; that all her subjects who have sworn to her are for ever absolved from their oaths; and all who shall henceforth obey her are involved in the like sentence of excommunication. This sentence was fatal to the unity of the English Church, for though the adherents of the Pope for the most part still came to church for a few years longer, it is obvious that those who believed in the power thus claimed by him, must have done so with an uneasy conscience. And it led to acts of retaliation on the part of the government, which they justified on the score of self-defence. In the year 1571 it was made high treason to publish that the queen is a heretic, or an usurper; and the like penalty was enacted against those who should publish any bull of reconciliation or absolution from Rome. A person was hanged as a traitor for posting up the bull of excommunication on the gates of the bishop of London's palace; and when the conduct of Roman Catholics, both at home and abroad, gave reason to believe that a design was entertained to assassinate the queen, still severer measures were passed. The massacre of St. Bartholomew at Paris, in 1572, approved as it was by the Pope and hailed with universal joy at Rome as a sacred act of piety, could not fail to alarm the English government. On that awfully memorable day two thousand Protestants collected at Paris under pretence of a royal marriage, and under the solemn protection of a royal promise, were massacred in cold blood, and this atrocious act, followed as it was by similar wickedness in the principal cities in the rest of France, was avowed by the king and his court, and solemnly approved by

the Roman conclave. It is to be hoped that they believed the assertion falsely propagated by the French king, that the Protestants had engaged in a conspiracy against him; but this could not justify them in going in procession to return thanks before the altar, as for a victory, for an event which has stamped an indelible stigma upon their cause.

It was such things as these and the dread of similar atrocities, which led to the severities that were exercised against the Roman Catholics in a later period of this reign. In the year 1580 it was made high treason to draw off any person from the Church of England to that of Rome, and all that should absent themselves from church were to incur the penalty of £20, while those who should willingly hear mass, were to pay one hundred marks and be subject to a year's imprisonment. The Jesuits, Campion and Parsons, were active in spreading the Roman Catholic doctrine at the hazard of their lives, and at length, in 1581, Campion and three others were executed for treason, and several more suffered the like penalty soon after. Their party called them martyrs, while the government denounced them as traitors. It is certain that they did not suffer on account of their faith, but because it had seemed necessary, in self-defence, to affix the penalties of treason to the propagation of a creed which was now embarked in deadly hostility to the established religion and government. Such measures are defended on the ground of political necessity; but if nations would learn to forgive on Christian principles, it is probable they would find that to do right was their best defence.

But another evil which sapped the vitals of this Church, arose from the dissentions among the Reformers themselves. Next to the proceedings of the Church of Rome, and in strange connexion with them, the separation of the Puritans from the English Church tended to impair and weaken it. The principle on which the English Reformation was conducted was essentially different from that of the foreign Churches. In England,

the avowed object had been to reform the Catholic Church, to recover its independence, and restore it to a primitive state, without destroying those ancient usages which had descended from primitive times. The foreign reformers had gone further. They had sought to form for themselves a system of faith and worship according to their own views of Scripture alone. It was inevitable that such opposite principles should lead to differences between their respective advocates. We have seen something of those differences already, in the refusal of Hooper to wear the episcopal dress, and in the troubles at Frankfort. But now that the English Reformation was restored, there was a large party who had imbibed the opinions of the Reformed Churches abroad, during their exile, who were bent upon carrying out those principles at home. This party, not adverting to the notion of reforming the Catholic Church, considered every vestige of Catholic usages as a badge of popery, and having learned to regard the foreign Protestants as in some sort their spiritual fathers, were dissatisfied with the intermediate position adopted by the English Church. It is probable that many of them would be averse to the royal supremacy, since Calvin had expressed himself against it, and John Knox was also opposed to it. But they did not stop here. The following are some of their objections as given, not by an enemy, but by one of their own writers[1]. They disapproved of the use of the surplice and other garments worn by the priests or bishops. They did not allow the office of bishops to be superior to that of priests or presbyters. They disliked the titles and offices of archdeacons, deans, and chapters. They complained of the restriction of ministers to *set forms of prayer*, and of what they called the vain repetitions prescribed in the Book of Common Prayer. They disapproved of instrumental music, of singing of prayers

---

1 Brown's *History of the British Churches.*

and other papal forms, as they termed them, in cathedral churches, of kneeling at the communion, turning to the east, bowing at the name of Jesus, and the use of the ring in marriage.

It is obvious that the concession of all these points would have involved a total surrender of those principles on which this Church had been reformed. And it should be remembered that large concessions had been already made, when the first Liturgy of King Edward had been so modified as it was, in accordance with the advice of foreigners. But when it had been resolved to concede no further, another question naturally arose, how far it was incumbent upon those who might differ in some respects from what was done, to yield to the decision of the national Church and Government. Jewel and many others who had wished the use of the surplice abolished, wisely considered it their duty to adopt it, and Coverdale, who was entirely of that party, officiated in a surplice at the consecration of Archbishop Parker. It appears that the bishops were reluctant to force the observance of ceremonies, however becoming in themselves, especially upon men, some of whom had been their own friends and fellow-exiles, and perhaps they hoped that time would wear out their scruples. But in the year 1564 the queen insisted that the archbishop should take measures for enforcing uniformity, and certain Articles were drawn up for that purpose. In these it was, among other things, provided, that none should preach without a license from the bishop; that the principal minister officiating at the Holy Communion in cathedrals should use a cope, and all other clergymen a surplice; and that all communicants should receive kneeling. These Advertisements, and the proceedings which followed upon them, occasioned the first open separation of the Non-conformists from the Church of England; and that so much the more, because they appeared to emanate from the bishops and not from the queen. For although it was done by her express command, she chose to throw the responsibility upon them,

and the odium was increased by some of her ministers, Leicester and Walsingham especially, taking the part of the Puritans. The most eminent of those who refused to comply were Cartwright, Regius Professor of Divinity at Cambridge, and Sampson and Humphries, the Dean of Christchurch and President of Magdalen College at Oxford. The last wrote to consult Bullinger and Gualter, whose authority was highly respected in England, and their advice was that they should comply. And Grindal, now bishop of London, who had decidedly inclined to the same opinions, wrote also to Bullinger as follows: "When they who had been exiles in Germany could not persuade the Queen and Parliament to remove these habits out of the Church, though they had long endeavoured it, by common consent they thought it best not to leave the Church for some rites which were not many in themselves, nor wicked, especially since the purity of the Gospel remained safe and free to them; nor had they at this present time repented themselves of this counsel[1]."

Unhappily, there were many who were not content to adopt this course; and in the beginning of the year 1566, the archbishop, still acting by the queen's express command, convened the whole of the London clergy, and required them to promise conformity. All who would not promise were suspended, with sentence of deprivation if they did not conform in three months, and the number of those who refused, and thus became the first Non-conformists, amounted to thirty-seven. Their first congregation was formed in the following year, A.D. 1567, the very same year in which the emissaries of Rome began to absolve those who would return to their communion, and in which also the first discovery was made of the attempts of the Jesuits to foment the discontent of the Puritans. Thenceforth the history of nonconformity is one of mutual recrimination between the two parties into

[1] See CARDWELL's *Documentary Annals*, i. 299, note.

which the English Reformation was thus unhappily divided. It can hardly be doubted now that the decision of the Church of England, on the main points at issue, was right. Still less can it be denied, that the wise and moderate course was that of those who chose to submit to the ordinances of that Church, even in spite of their own particular wishes. Nor could it fail to excite something of indignation in those who saw the work of reformation tarnished by such mistaken pertinacity; but, on the other hand, it must be for ever regretted, that the strong arm of the civil government should have interfered in such a case. It is impossible to say whether any concessions would have reconciled the party holding such opinions to remain in the communion of the Church. But the course that was adopted had the effect of precipitating a separation which was perhaps inevitable, at the same time that it seemed to afford a justification to those who were the immediate sufferers.

A third cause which operated to mar the success of the English Reformation, was stated to be the mistaken notions of Church Government adopted by Queen Elizabeth. The proper notion of a national Church is that in which the clergy and the people so concur in the laws relating to religion, that no such laws can be made by the clergy without the consent of the people, nor by these without the consent of the clergy. In opposition to this principle, the clergy in the Church of Rome had for some ages usurped the whole legislative power of the Church, and the royal supremacy was originally nothing more than the resumption of a right inherent in the crown, on behalf of the authorities of the state, to be assenting to all such laws as should be made. But Henry VIII. was so absolute a monarch, that he in fact engrossed the whole legislative power; and his daughter, though she wisely rejected the offensive expression of the Head of the Church, was resolved to govern it notwithstanding. According to her notions, the legislative authority of the Church would

have resided in herself and the Convocation of the clergy, in the same way as that of the state resided in herself and the Parliament; and having made use of the Parliament to restore the religion of the Reformation, her object was to prevent that body from meddling any more. But this would have been in fact to bring back, under another form, the very evil that had been before complained of, and so it was thought by the House of Commons, one of whose members, Wentworth, said once to the bishops, "Make you Popes who list, for we will make you none." It was upon this principle that the queen twice prevented the Parliament from making laws relating to the discipline of the Church. Not that she was averse to discipline, but that she wished that the clergy alone should make such laws, by way of canons, to be promulged in her own name. When the Articles were agreed upon by the Convocation, the Parliament wished to adopt them, but she forbade them, alleging that, "she was minded to put them forth on her own authority alone," nor was it till some years later that this point was carried. But the strongest instance of her resolution to be the sole governor of the Church was her treatment of Archbishop Grindal. She had promoted him from the see of London to the archbishopric of York, and from thence, on Parker's death, to that of Canterbury. Not long after, she ordered him to put down certain religious exercises among the clergy called Prophesyings, of which she disapproved. These were meetings held by the clergy among themselves at their different churches, where passages of Scripture were discussed, and other matters debated. It seems that some of the Non-conformists came sometimes, and that some things were said against the Liturgy. The archbishop, however, was of opinion that they might be useful if duly regulated, and he wrote to the queen a letter of respectful but firm remonstrance against her interference in the government of the Church in spiritual matters. Elizabeth was so offended that she suspended him from his functions; and though the rest of the bishops, and afterwards the

Convocation, petitioned on his behalf, he never afterwards fully regained her favour. It is by such acts as these that the royal supremacy has become a name of doubtful import, and that the Church of England has been thought to be subject to a new tyranny in the place of that of Rome; but it is not necessarily so. What we require is, that it should be understood that no laws relating to spiritual matters should pass without the clergy, but that the clergy should make no such laws except with the consent of Parliament. This point secured, the pastoral office may be exercised, without gainsaying, by those to whom it belongs by the divine appointment.

The Thirty-nine Articles were agreed upon by the Convocation of the clergy in the year 1562. It has been already mentioned, that the doctrine of the Church relating to the Eucharist was now modified, so as to admit a Real Presence. Another alteration that was made related to the authority of the Church. It was declared that the Church has power to decree rites and ceremonies, and authority in controversies of faith, subject, however, to the written word of God. The whole of this sentence was omitted in some printed copies, which gave rise to a suspicion of its having been clandestinely inserted, but it has been positively shown, that such was not the case. It is probable that those by whom this article was drawn, intended to signify that such authority resides in the synod of the clergy, but it appears that such a principle was not recognised by Parliament. At the same convocation an attempt was made in the Lower House to modify some of the usages, with a view to meet the wishes of the Puritans. It was proposed that the use of the cross in baptism should be optional; that the practice of kneeling at the Sacrament should be left to the discretion of the ordinary, and that the minister in time of prayer should turn his face to the people. These proposals were negatived by a majority of one, and have never since been revived; and although the practice of turning to the people has pretty generally

prevailed, it is contrary to the recorded decision of the Church. Like the rest of the practices on which the Puritans insisted, it involves the adoption or rejection of an important principle. To turn to the people in preaching and reading the Bible, and in offering prayer to God to turn away from them towards the more sacred part of the Church, where the holy mysteries are celebrated, has nothing in it superstitious in itself, but implies a recognition of the immediate presence of Him to whom our prayers are offered. But to use the words of Archbishop Laud, "Scarce anything hath hurt religion more in these broken times, than an opinion in too many men, that because Rome hath thrust some unnecessary, and many superstitious, ceremonies upon the Church, therefore the Reformation must have none at all; not considering the while, that ceremonies are the hedge that fence the substance of religion from all the indignities which profaneness and sacrilege too commonly put upon it. And a great weakness it is, not to see the strength which ceremonies (things weak enough in themselves, God knows,) add even to religion itself[1]."

It was not until A.D. 1571 that the Parliament succeeded, after more than one attempt, in obtaining the queen's consent to an Act for the ratification of the Thirty-nine Articles[2], in which Act, without pretending to alter what the National Synod had decreed as articles of faith, they excepted those which relate to the authority of the Church, so as not to require subscription to them. Unhappily, the queen proceeded on her own authority in the way already mentioned, and in the canons which were passed in the same year, no such exception was allowed, nor would she allow the canons to be ratified by Parliament.

It remains to mention some other alterations that took place in this reign, relating to the services and doctrine of the Church. The Prayer-Book of Edward had contained no proper lessons for Sundays, but only

[1] LAUD's *Conference with Fisher*, Dedi. p. 1639. [2] 13 Eliz. c. 12.

for holidays; but when revised before the Act of Uniformity of Elizabeth's reign, certain lessons were appointed for Sundays also. And in the year 1560 a more complete arrangement of the lessons was made by Archbishop Parker, under the royal authority, which was very similar to that now in use. Some discretion, however, was left with the minister to vary the chapters occasionally, which remained till after the last Act of Uniformity at the Restoration. In the year 1561 it was ordered, that in addition to the Catechism in the Prayer-Book, which was intended for young persons before confirmation, and which did not as yet contain that part relating to the sacraments, a larger catechism should be provided for the further instruction of communicants, and a third in Latin for more learned persons. This work was confided to Dean Nowel, and the Catechism which bears his name was drawn up by him in 1562, and publicly authorised by the canons of 1571. There is nothing in the present condition of the Church more to be regretted than the discontinuance of the practice of public catechism in church; nothing which would tend so much, under God's blessing, to restore a healthy tone to the religion of the people than the revival of such a practice, and nothing for which the Reformers themselves more assiduously laboured.

In the year 1568 a new translation of the Bible was published by Archbishop Parker, which is generally known as the "Bishops' Bible." It was a sort of revision of former translations, and was thought the more necessary in consequence of the extensive sale of a Puritan edition, generally called the "Geneva Bible," which contained marginal notes and comments, in which, together with much that was valuable, there was also much that partook of a more questionable character. For example, in one of these notes, bishops and archbishops were called "apocalyptic locusts." It is to be feared that such language was only too true a sample of much that was current among a certain class of reformers. The *Book of Martyrs* of John Foxe,

the most popular book next after the Bible, was written in this style. Foxe was a man of true piety, and of great simplicity of character, nor can the honesty of his intentions be justly impeached; but being also a man whose judgment was less strong than his feelings, he was easily led to adopt the opinions of the more violent of his party. Having joined himself therefore with John Knox at Geneva and Frankfort, he wrote his laborious book after his return from exile, in the spirit of one who believed that the whole Catholic Church was apostate, and that all who had ever belonged to it were servants of Antichrist. It is too true that the Catholic Church had become awfully corrupt. It may be that the papal power is or was a developement of Antichrist; certainly it was thought to be so not by Puritans only, but by such men as Cranmer and Ridley, and by many before their time; but such writings as those of Foxe, valuable as they are by way of historical records, were calculated to widen the breach between the two Churches, and to engender a spirit of bitterness that is much to be regretted.

And yet amidst this conflict of violent opinions on either side, we still may trace an unbroken succession of good and holy men, who sought their happiness and found their reward in moderate opinions and laborious piety. Misunderstood perhaps at the time, because they would not belong to a party, they were suspected by both; yet theirs was the middle course between extreme opinions, and it is that course by which the Church of England has remained a witness to the world, of Catholic principles on the one hand, and of primitive piety on the other. Archbishop Parker himself, however traduced by the party to whom he was opposed, was one of these: a man of most simple manners, without ambition and without ostentation, yet who knew the value of the Catholic Church, and by whose aid, under the divine blessing, Catholic principles were preserved to us. And such, in a different sphere, was Bernard Gilpin; a man who did not think it wrong to

accept a living from his uncle Bishop Tonstal during the reign of Queen Mary, yet so far from being a papist, that he was on his way to London as a prisoner on a charge of heresy, under a warrant from Bonner, when he was delayed by a fall from his horse till after Queen Mary's death. As he made no scruple afterwards of maintaining Catholic principles, the Roman party made overtures to bring him to their side; but they found him among their most strenuous opponents. Firm in his conviction of the original right of independence in a national Church, he was instant in season and out of season in preaching the reformed doctrine, and his name is still revered among the inhabitants of the north of England. A little later was RICHARD HOOKER. It is not the smallest part of the praise of Bishop Jewel that he should have been the early patron at Oxford of such a man as Hooker. His five books of Ecclesiastical Polity, written in the retirement of a country parsonage, were called forth as such works usually are, by the writings of Cartwright, under whose auspices the Puritan opinions seem to have sapped the foundations of the English Church. But Hooker undertook the defence of a reformation on Catholic principles, and he did it with a master's hand.

Three centuries have since elapsed, and the Church of England, through various fortune, has still continued a witness to the truths for which Hooker wrote and Ridley died. In the mean time some alterations of importance have taken place, which are the more deserving of notice, because they have been silently introduced. Of these the earliest, if not the most remarkable, has been the alteration effected in the use of the Liturgy by putting all the services together. So early as the reign of Edward VI., there had been an injunction that the communion service on holidays should follow the morning prayer. But in the year 1571, when Grindal was archbishop of York, he issued injunctions to his province, in which he "directed the minister not to pause between the morning prayer,

litany and communion; but to continue and say the morning prayer, litany and communion, or the service appointed to be said when there was no communion, together without intermission; to the intent the people might continue together in prayer, and hearing the word of God; and not depart out of the church, during all the time of the whole divine service." It is obvious that this injunction to the province of York could not be binding upon the National Church, but it is evidence of the state of things at the time, and the probability is that this practice had been already adopted elsewhere, and perhaps had been admitted by the exiles during the preceding reign. The original usage was for a length of time preserved in cathedral churches, and has been continued even to the present day in those of Winchester and Worcester, where the morning prayer is at an early hour, and the liturgy properly so called, that is, the communion service, is introduced by the litany at ten o'clock.

How far this change may have helped to give a different character to our services from that which was originally intended, need not be here discussed. But it is probable that it led to another equally remarkable alteration. One of the great complaints before the Reformation had been the infrequency of the holy communion, and it was intended to remedy this evil by appointing that it should be administered every Sunday and holiday at the least, and that some should always communicate with the priest. But this soon ceased to be the case, and it was appointed that some part of the service should still be used when there was no communion. At length, when it was complained that the service was too long, this part was also omitted, and the divine service, which ought to close with the holy communion, was concluded by the sermon. It is worthy of consideration how far this practice may have tended to give to the office of preaching a sacramental character. The proper food of our souls is the mystical body and blood of Christ; and if they are not

fed with that, the more they love God, they will seek to satisfy their cravings after Him by other means; whence there may be a danger of expecting other things from the office of preaching than those which it is designed to convey. Another primitive usage which has silently been discontinued is, that of the bidding of prayer. The preacher before the sermon used to bid the people to pray for all sorts of persons, a practice which admitted of some variety and was very simple and natural, especially if he paused afterwards a little to allow them to pray in private. A specimen of such a prayer has been given above, as used a little before the Reformation, and it was continued afterwards in the royal injunctions of Elizabeth, and in the canons of James I. Instead of this, the Puritans indulged in long extempore prayers before their sermons, and when these were discontinued, the parochial clergy for the most part adopted one of the collects appointed to be said at the end of the communion service, and when the rest of the post-communion also was omitted, another of these collects was usually selected after the sermon.

It is not correct to suppose that the office of parish clerk, or the practice of his answering alone for the congregation, has been introduced since the Reformation. In Bishop Ridley's book upon the Sacrament, where he objects to the use of a Latin ritual, he says, "The people, or he which supplies the place of the people, is compelled to say amen, when he has not heard what the priest has spoken." And in one of King Edward's injunctions, "parish clerks" are mentioned as an office already in existence. Another office appears to have been allowed in the earlier part of the reign of Queen Elizabeth, the loss of which has been regretted. It seems to have been usual to licence persons as "Readers," who were to be in a manner subsidiary to the priest or curate of the parish, assisting him in the performance of divine service, and intended to form a link between the minister and his flock. But this appears to have been afterwards discountenanced.

The office of deacon also has practically been merged in that of priest, and the practice of consecrating coadjutor bishops, which was continued in the reign of Elizabeth, has silently fallen into disuse.

An important change has arisen in the internal arrangement of our churches, which deserves to be considered. It is not indeed the case that there were no pews before the Reformation. The name itself is sometimes found, and although these were often open seats, it is evident that distinguished persons had an enclosed seat for themselves and their families. In the record of a scandalous fray which took place in the reign of Henry VI., in the church of St. Dunstan in the East on Easter Sunday, between two noblemen and their partisans, it is mentioned that one of them, Lord L'Estrange, came out of a place called "the closet," in which he had been hearing divine service, and the other, Sir John Trussel, fell down when assaulted, between a seat and a desk. And in the "Supplication of poor Commons" to Henry VIII. after the Act of the Six Articles, complaint was made that the priest and others put the Bible (which was ordered to be set up in churches) "either into the quire, or into *some pew where poor men durst not presume to come*[1]." But in general the body of the church was fitted up with open seats, such as still remain in many country places, the choir being wholly reserved to the clergy, except that a seat there was sometimes permitted to the patron, as is mentioned in the diocesan canons of Bishop Grosthead. It was not uncommon to fence off the upper end of the side aisles with a beautiful screen of open wood-work, which usually enclosed a small chantry reserved for the burial of private families and for masses for their souls. When these places ceased to be used for the latter purpose, it is probable that the families to whom they belonged would use them for attending divine service,

[1] Strype, *Eccl. Mem.* i. 612.

and thus the notion would be introduced of having a distinguished "pew" for the chief families in a parish. By degrees, others would think themselves entitled to the same, until the whole church was divided into separate enclosures. But much has been done and is now doing towards a return to a greater simplicity in this respect[1].

Another most important alteration has been effected by the gradual substitution of a compulsory poor rate in the place of the weekly collection for the poor appointed to be made in church by the rubrics in the Prayer Book. There is no doubt that the Act, commonly known as the Poor Law Act, of the 43rd of Elizabeth, was nothing else than an enlargement of several previous statutes, by which it had been provided that the weekly collection should be compulsory. It is probable that it was not intended to discontinue the practice of collecting also at church, but merely to enforce the contribution upon those who were less willing, and it is a noble provision of a Christian country. But at a time when it has been found necessary to restrict the liberality with which this fund had been administered, it is peculiarly worthy of consideration how far we might provide against the suffering incidental to the recent change, by resuming the practice of Church collections.

In conclusion, it is probable that the just light in which to contemplate the Reformed Church of England, is that of a providential dispensation, appointed to accomplish certain purposes and be a witness to certain truths, in the history of the Church of Christ. It would not be difficult to trace many particular incidents which appear to have been especially overruled towards the accomplishment of this purpose. But as we need not doubt that a National Church was justi-

[1] It may be proper to mention that the above was written before the publication of the Cambridge Camden Society's "Tract upon Pues."

fied in attempting a reformation by itself, in despair of a general reformation, so have we much ground for thankfulness, amidst some causes of regret, as to the mode in which it was accomplished[1]. That this Church was so justified in that course may be safely left to the simple unbiassed judgment of unprejudiced minds, and it will be on such grounds that the majority of persons will ever decide such questions. And there is this further observation to be made respecting the British Churches. Either the original Church in England and Ireland has ceased to exist, or it exists in those Reformed Churches which are now recognised by law. Those who now assume the name of "Catholics" in either country, derive their orders and the origin of their religion from Rome, since the Reformation, and have no pretence to inherit the authority or the succession of those Churches which were planted by Patrick or by Augustine, or of that which existed in England before Augustine. The succession of those Churches has been continued with our bishops and presbyters, *and with them alone;* the bishops ejected by Elizabeth never attempted to continue the succession, and those who now exercise the functions of bishops or presbyters amongst us by authority from Rome, must allege that they come as missionaries to an apostate or heretical country, to found a new Church, without a pretence that they have any authority by descent from that Church which originally existed amongst us.

[1] "When we speak, then, of the good and of the evil side in human life,—in any society whether smaller or larger,—this is what we mean, or should mean. The evil side contains much that is, up to a certain point, good; the good side,—for does it not consist of human beings?—contains, unhappily, much in it that is evil. Not all in the one is to be avoided,—far from it, nor is all in the other by any means to be followed. But still, those are called evil, in God's judgment, who live according to their own impulses, or according to the law of the society around them; and those are to be called good, who, in their principles, whatever may be the imperfections of their practice, endeavour in all things to live according to the will of Christ."—ARNOLD'S *Christian Life.* Serm. ix.

We hear that great exertions are now making, and great expectations raised, of the reunion of this nation with what is called "the Catholic Church." We are told also that associations are formed in Roman Catholic countries for offering up constant prayers for such a result. Very different indeed are such weapons from those which were formerly in use against us. May the result be different! May those prayers be heard, though it be otherwise than is intended. May He whose alone it is to turn the hearts of the parents to their children, enlighten the minds of those who thus pray for us, that they may see and acknowledge their own imperfections, and the sins of their forefathers. Then they will perceive that it was themselves who made the schism, by separating us from their communion because we would not continue in their errors. In the mean while, so long as Rome continues what she is, we may not, dare not, unite ourselves with her again. To do so would be to forego the best inheritance of our country, if not also to forsake still higher and holier destinies. We know not what purposes the gracious providence of God may yet accomplish towards us. But this we know, that our Church, imperfect as it is, (and we need not fear to acknowledge our imperfections,) is yet a beacon to the nations, of apostolical authority on the one hand, and of scripture truth on the other. It has been attempted more than once, in the course of events which have been here related, to point out the influence which the PRAYERS of those who were attached to the reformed doctrine may have had upon those events. Individuals may have judged amiss, but God has given us a Church according to their prayers; be it ours to PRAY for its increase in all Christian graces.

APPENDIX.

A., page 61.

Vaudois MSS.

In the public Library at Geneva there are three separate Books of MSS. belonging to the Vaudois' Churches, of which the first, (No. 207 in the catalogue) contains *La Nobla Leiçon* and several other pieces, and is said by the compiler of the catalogue to be in the language of the Troubadours, and of the 12th century. The second, No. 208, he says is in *Patois Vaudois*, and he assigns it to the 14th century. It is from this MS. that the translations are given in the text. The third MS., No. 209, called Les Conseils des Barbets, is also said to be in *Patois Vaudois*, but of the 15th century. A few extracts from the second of these volumes are here subjoined in the original. "De li articles d' la fe. Lo prumier article d' la nr̂a fe es qy nos creyen en un dio payre tot poissant creator del cel e de la terra. lo qual dio es un ê trinita. Coma es scrpt enlaley (q. d. est script' en la loi), Q'Israel au (audiat Israel) lo teo Segnor dio es un. Eph. e (9 d. Eph. v.) un signor, una fe, un baptisme, un dio paire d' tuit. E. Joh. ept. a 4 [5 ?]. Trey son qui donâ testimoi al cel, lo paire, lo fills, e lo sant sp't, agsti (e questi) trey son un. E. enlevangli d' Joh 17, es d'mostra lo paire e lo fills e lo sant spit ess un, &c." Then follows an attribution of the several articles of the creed successively to the several apostles. "Sẫt Peyre apostol panse lo p̃ mer article dizent, Io creo en dio lo payre tot poissant, creator del cel e d'la trâ [with confirmations from ss.] Sant Joh̃ pause lo 2 article diszent Io creo ê ŷ x° uniant fills di dio nre Segnor, &c."

After the creed there follows in the same vol., "de li sept sacrament," where under the head of "Penance" is given the passage translated in the text. "De la qual p̃ma nos tenem̃ p̃ fe e confessen puramễt di cor qu ella es besogmuol a lome cagi p̃ sfaczar lo pecca. A laqual se deo continuẫt amonestar e amonestem qu

li pecca se confesson segond la forma de la p'mtiva gleisa, e requerir consells e las besognas apl^{s} prudent e savi desi. la forma e obligatio introduct novellam^{c}t d' y^{c}nocent terz laqual solon husar com^{c}unam^{e}t lipu er symoniach se deo squinar e fugir d'lifidel, &c."

On the subject of "the fourth sacrament" that of orders, there is a remarkable agreement between some of their opinions, and those of Wycliffe, who wrote about the same time. For instance, they say, "Alla gleisa conven haver dos ma^{c}ieras domes generat. cgoes. (It belongs to the Church to have two ways of generating men) cgoes (Italicè *cioe*) spr^{c}ial^{t} e corporalm^{e}t—(namely, spiritually and bodily). Empyo so^{c} dui sacrament hacrear paires daquesta maneira. Lo prima es lorde loqual es a crear paires spu^{c}als, di qual si parla al p se t. Lautre es lomatmo i loqual es a dir di sot." (Wherefore, there are two sacraments to create Fathers, in this manner. The first is orders, which is to create spiritual Fathers, of which we speak of at present. The other is matrimony which is to be spoken of below.) Compare this with the following extract from Wycliffe's Dialogues, Pt. 4, c. 1, p. 3. "Sed quia ecclesiam oportet habere duas maneries hominum generantium, scilicet spiritualiter et corporaliter, ideo duo sunt sacramenta ad patres hujusmodi procreandum. Primum est ordo, qui est sacramentum ad clericos, et specialiter ad presbiteros procreandum—secundum vero est matrimonium, &c."

B., p. 101.

Stigmata of St. Catharine.

The *Stigmata* of St. Francis of Assisi, gave rise to a similar claim on behalf of other Saints, and especially of St. Catharine of Siena. And these claims led to controversy, and even to contradictory decrees on the part of the Popes themselves, the Dominicans asserting and the Franciscans denying that St. Catharine had been thus honoured. Pius II., being himself a Sienese, canonised her, and declared that she had the Stigmata. But Sixtus IV., a Franciscan, who became Pope, A.D. 1471, on the death of Paul II., who was the successor in 1464 of Pius II., decreed on the contrary A.D. 1483, according to Melchior Canus, *that it was not true that she had them.* Melchior Canus was a Spanish Dominican, much reputed at the Council of Trent, who died A.D. 1560. He was censured for having said so, as if he had accused the Popes of disagreeing among themselves; but his editor (p. cxiii.) who defends him, asserts that Sixtus merely forbad St. Catharine to be *represented* with the Stigmata. Such were the questions which agitated the Church during these ages, and such the quibbles by which they were eluded.

C., p. 126.

Specimens of old English Versions of Scripture.

I. Richard of Hampole's Psalter. About A.D. 1340. With a Comment.

PSALM XCI.

1. He that wonnes in help of the Heghest[1], in hillyng[2] of God of heven he shal dwell.

2. He shal sey til Lord, Myn uptaker ert thou, and my fleyng; my God, I shal hope in him.

3. For he delyverd me of the snare of huntand and of sharpe word.

4. With his shuldurs he shal um-shadow[3] til the, and undur his fethurs thou shal hope[4].

5. With shilde shall um-gif (encompass) the his sothfastnes; and thou shal not drede of the drede of nyght;

6. Of arow fleand in day, of nedis gangand in merknes[5], of inras[6], and mydday devyl[7].

7. Fal shal fro thi syde a thousande, and fro thi rigt syde ten thousande; bot til the he shal not nyghe.

8. Trougth for thi[8], with thin een thou shal behold, and the yeldyng[9] of synful thou shal see.

9. For thou art, Lorde, my hope: heghest thou sett thy fleyng[10].

10. Ill shal not cum til the, and swyngyng[11] shal not nyghe til thi tabernakul.

---

[1] Highest (Yorkshire dialect).

[2] Covering, or protection. So Wycliffe, 1 Cor. xi. 6, "Therefore the woman shal have an *hilyng* on her head."

[3] Shadow thee about. The old Saxon preposition *umb* or *ymb*, around or about.

[4] Hampole's note is, "Thou shal hope to be *hild* fro the hete (heat) of synne. He spekis at the lyknyng of the hen, that *hilles* her briddes (birds) under her wynges fro the glede (the kite)."

[5] Of needs, or business, going in darkness. Hampole's note: "That is, when a man is in doute (doubt) what he shal do or what he shal fle."

[6] In-raids, *i. e.* inroads (north-country dialect, from the Saxon on-ɲæþ). Hampole's note: "The rysing of ill men ageyns the."

[7] Hampole's note: "When the fiend transforms him in aungel of ligth, and makes him to seem brigt as mydday for to deceyf men."

[8] For thy truth.

[9] Yielding.

[10] Hampole's note: "Ful pryne (prone, willingly, and readily), thou gaf me grace to fle til the in al my nede."

[11] Swingeing, stripes or blows.

11. For til his aungels he bad of the, that thei kepe the in all thi wayes.

12. In thair handis thei shal bere the lestwhen[1] thou hurt til stone thi fote.

13. On the snake and the basiliske thou shal go, and thou shal defoule the lion and the dragon[2].

14. For he hopid in me, I shal delyver him: I shal kill him, for he knew my name.

15. He cried til me, and I shal here him: with him I am in tribulacyon; I shal out-take him, and I shal glorifie him.

16. In lengthe of dayes I shal fille him, and I shal shew til him my hele[3].

II. Wycliffe's Bible. A.D. 1380.

From Job xxxix. xl. xli.

Wher thou schalt gyve strengthe to an horse: ether (either) schalt gyve neiyng aboute his necke?

Wher thou schalt reise him as locustis? the glorie of his nose-thirles is drede.

He diggith erthe with the foote: he fulli joieth booldli: he goith agenst armed men: he dispisith ferdfulnesse, and he gyveth not stide to swerd.

An arrow-caas schal sowne on him: a spere and scheelde schal florische.

He is hoot and gnashith and swolewith the erthe: and he aret-tith not (recketh not) that the cry of the trumpe sowneth; whenne he herith a clarioun, he seith joie, he smellith batel afer, the excityng of duykis (dukes), and the gelling (yelling) of the oost.

---

[1] Lest at any time.

[2] Hampole's note: "The snake is ill eggyng (evil tempting), that with delite and assentyng til synne bringis forth the basiliske, that is, grete synne in dede. The basiliske is cald (called) king of serpentes, and his sigt sleeth (slayeth) al lifand (living) thing. So grete synne in dede with ill ensample slees alle the virtues of the soule. The lyon is cruelte to his neybur. The dragon is gyle (guile) and pryve malice. But the rightwis man, like the weasil, goes on it with his fote of gode-wille, and over-comes it."

[3] Hampole's note: "That is, I shall fille him with endlesse life, that suffices til fillyng of mannes appetite. And I shal shew him, that he see ee til ee (eye to eye), and speke mouth til mouth, my hele (health), that is, Crist; in whose mageste the sigt is filled, all is mede (reward) and joy that none may telle."

Wycliffe's Note.

Bi the name of an olifaunt and of a whal God descryveth the power and malice of the fend, and of his membris, how they be knyt to gider in malice, and hardid in synne, that no man may overcome the devel and hise membris by man's virtu, but onely by Goddis virtu and help.

Lo, behemot, whom Y made with thee, shal as an oxe ete hey.

His strengthe is in hise leendis (loins), and his vertu is in the nawle of his wombe.

He streyneth his tail as a tedre (tether): the senewis of hise buttokis ben foldid to gidere.

His boonys ben as pipis of bras: the gristil of him is as platis of irun.

He is the bigynnyng of the weies of God: he that made him schal sette his sweerd to him. (That is, power to annoye, which he may not use, no but by Goddis suffring.—Wycliffe's note).

Hilles beren erbis to this behemot; all the beestis of the feeld playen there.

He slepith undur schadewe in the pryvyte of rehed (reed): in moist places schadewis hilen his schadewe.

The salewis of the ryver cumpassen him: he schal soup up the flood, and he schal not wondre. He hath trist that Jordan schal flowe into his mouth.

He schal take hem bi the igen of hym as bi an hook, and bi scharpe schaftis he schal perische hise nesethirles.

Wher thou schalt mow drawe out levyathan with an hook, and schalt binde with a roop (rope) his tunge?

Wher thou schalt putte a ryng in his nesethirles, ether schalt peerse his cheke with an hook?

Wher he schal multiplie praieris (prayers) to thee? ether schal speke softe thingis to thee?

Wher he schal make a covenaunt with thee, and thou schalt take him a servaunt everlastynge?

Wher thou schalt scorne him as a brid, ether schalt bynde him to thin handmaidis?

Schulen frendis kerve him, schulen marchauntis depart him?

Wher thou schalt fille nettis with his skyn, and a leep [1] of fischis with his heed?

Schalt thou put thyn hand on hym? have thou mynde of the batel, and adde no more to speke. (Wycliffe's note:—to speke ony thing, that sowneth to decreessing of Goddis rightfulnesse and wisdom.)

Lo, his hope schal disseyve him; and in the sigt of alle men he schal be cast doun.

---

[1] A leep—a weel, or twiggen snare to catch fish; in Lancashire now called a leap.—Bosworth's *Dictionary*.

D., p. 159.

Tracie's Will.

"The Testament of Master Wylliam Tracie Esquier, expounded by William Tindall: wherein thou shalt perceive with what charitie the chauncellor of Worcester burned when he toke up the dead man's carkas and made ashes of hit, after it was buried.—M.D.XXXV."

The Testament hitself. In the name of God, Amen. I, Wylliam Tracie of Todyngton in the Countie of Gloceter Esquier, make my Testament and last wyl, as here after folowith.

First, and before all other thinge, I com̃yt me unto God, and to his mercye, trustyng without any dowte or mystrust, that by his grace and the merytes of Jesus Christe, and by the vertue of his passion, and of his resurrection, I have and shall have remission of my synnes and resurrection of my bodye and soule, accordyng as hit is written, Job xix., I believe that my redeamer lyveth and that in the last day I shal ryse out of the erth, and in my flesh shal se my Saviour, this my hope is laid up in my bosome.

And towchyn the wealth of my soule the fayth that I have taken and rehersed, is suffycient (as I suppose) without any other man's worke or workis. My grounde and my belief is, that ther is but one god and one mediatour betwene god and man, whych is Jesus Chryste. So that I do not except none in heaven or erthe to be my mediatour between me and god, but onely Jesus Chryst, al other be but petitioners in recevinge of grace, but one able to give influence of grace. And therfore wyll I bestowe no part of my goodes for that intent that any man shoulde saye, or do, to healpe my soule, for therein I trust onely to the promyse of God, he that beleveth and is baptized shal be saved, and he that beleveth not shal be damned. Marke, the last chapter.

And touchyng the burying of my body, it avayleth me not what be done therto, where in Sainct Austin *de curâ agendâ pro mortuis* saith that they are rather the solace of them that live than wealthe or comfort of them that are departed, and therfore I remit hit onely to the dyscretion of myne executors.

And touching the distribution of my temporal goodes, my purpose is by the grace of God to bestow them to be accepted as frutes of faith. So that I do not suppose that my merite be, by good bestowinge of them, but my merite is the faithe of Jesus Chryst only, by whych faith such workes are good according to the wordes of our Lord, Matt. xxv., I was hongrye and thou gavest me to eate, and it folowith, that ye have done to the least of my brethren ye have done to me &c. And even we should consyder

the trew sentence that a good worke maketh not a good man, but a good man maketh a good worke, for faith maketh the man both good and ryghtwyse, for a ryghtwyse man lyveth by faith, Rom. i. and whatsoever springeth not of faith is sin. Rom. xiiii.

And all my temporal goodes &c. Witness this myne owne hande, the x daye of October, in the xxii yere of the rayne of King Henry the VIII.

Printed "at Noremburch 1546."

E.

Character of Cranmer.

In the Ecclesiastical Biography of the Rev. Dr. Hook, vol. iii. p. 262, article "Cranmer," the following sentence occurs.

"It is much to be regretted that, by the spoliation of the Church, Cranmer, among other courtiers, sought to enrich his family. King Edward the VIth., in the first year of his reign, granted among other estates all the demesne lands in Horsforth, belonging to the monastery of Kirkstall, the ruins of which are still the ornament of the parish of Leeds, to Archbishop Cranmer. And in the fourth year of the same reign, the same archbishop obtained a license to alienate these lands to one Peter Hammond, and others, to the use of Thomas Cranmer his eldest son, and his heirs. This alienation of church property during the royal minority, and when the archbishop's influence as one of the regency, must have been great, will ever be a reflection upon his grace's character, while it betrays a worldliness of mind which his piety was unable to overcome."

As this story, (which was told in even stronger terms, in a previous publication, on the authority of "Thoresby's History of Leeds,") seems to be the main foundation of much that is said of Cranmer as a "weak" and "rather self-indulgent" person, it is important to place it in the true light. And it appears, on other and equally good authority, 1st. That this grant was obtained from Henry VIII., so that the deed of Edw. VI. was merely a confirmation of the act of his father; and consequently that the accusation of having obtained it "during the royal minority" falls to the ground. 2ndly. That the lands thus obtained *were not granted in free gift to the archbishop, but purchased by him from the crown;* and that some of them were not abbey lands; 3rdly. That it is doubtful whether any part of them was alienated to his own children.

The passage from Thoresby is as follows. "Cookridge is a village four miles distant from Leedes. . . . . The first notice I find of this town is in the Monasticon Anglicanum, as part of the

possessions belonging to Kirkstall Abbey, to which it was given during the time of the very first Abbot, Alexander, and continued to the last, being part of their demesnes where the dairy was kept. Upon the Dissolution of the house it was granted by K. H. VIII., together with the site of the monastery, &c., by indenture dated 10 June, 1540, to Robt. Pakeman, Gent., of the king's household, under the yearly rent of £51 14*s*. King Edw. VI., by letters patent dated 1 June, in the 1st year of his reign, gave it to Archbishop Cranmer, the famous martyr, whose son, Thomas Cranmer, Esq., sold it with several other places therein mentioned to Sir Thos. Cecil—and Willm. Carnock, Yeoman, for the sum of £2800, which deed bears date 23d Feb., 25 Eliz."

The authority given by Thoresby for his statement is *Lit. Pat. penes Thos. Kirke Armr.*, apparently the original Letters Patent of King Edward. But Dr. Whitaker in his edition of Thoresby subjoins the following note. "King Edw. VI. did not give Kirkstall to the archbishop, but sold it with Cookridge, Arthington Nunnery, and the rectories of Aslacton Com. Notts, Whalley and Rochdale Com. Lanc. for £429 13*s*. 2*d*., which made them (?) £569 3*s*. pr ann. A good Pennyworth though no gift."

In his own work, however, Dr. Whitaker says, (art. Kirkstall, p. 120.) "The site and demesnes were granted by Ed. VI. to Thos. Cranmer, archbishop of Canterbury, and by him settled upon his younger son."

Thus far the statements of Thoresby and Whitaker. But additional information is supplied in the following more detailed account of the same transaction, in Dr. Thoroton's History of Nottinghamshire, a book of high authority, vol. i. p. 262, article "Aslacton," and in Bishop Tanner's *Notitia Monastica*, "Yorkshire, 68"—compared with Dugdale, new edn. v. 529.

Dr. Thoroton's statement is as follows:—"King Edward the Sixth, by his indenture, bearing date the 20th of March, in the first year of his reign, for the sum of £429 13*s*. 2*d*., granted to Thomas Cranmer, archbishop of Canterbury, the scite of the Priory of Arthington, and divers lands thereunto belonging, and the scite of the Monastery of Kirkstall, and the demesne lands thereof, and other lands belonging to it, both in Yorkshire, and the Rectories of Whatton and Aslacton, with the advowson of the churches, both which then lately belonged to the Monastery of Welbeck; and the Manor of Woodhall, (in Ratcliffe), in this county, (Notts) late part of the possessions of Thomas Grey, Esq., and the advowson of the church of Kingesworth, in Kent, to him and his heirs for ever.

"His nephew, Thomas Cranmer, son of his brother John, by his said first wife, died, seized of the Rectory of Whatton and Aslacton, 8 December 5 Ed. VI., to which belonged one hundred acres of

land, twenty of meadow, thirty of pasture, in Whatton and Aslacton, and also the Manor of Aslacton, six mess. &c., and two mess. in Whatton, and left his son, Thomas Cranmer, his heir, then above twenty-two years of age."

[In the "Additions to Thoroton," follow some absurd stories about the archbishop having "thrown up a hill, on the summit of which he used to sit and listen to the tunable bells of Whatton." He never can have lived there since his youth. It was not his property. He merely bought the great tithes and sold or gave them to his nephew, the head of his family. It is necessary to mention this, lest these *tolerabiles ineptiæ* should discredit the authority of Thoroton, by whom nothing of the kind is said.]

Bishop Tanner further says, art. "Kirkstall," "The site was granted in exchange, to Archbishop Cranmer, and his heirs, 34 *Hen. VIII.* and 1 Edw. VI.," which is repeated by the editors of Dugdale, l. c.

If it be said that the purchase-money was less than the actual value, this is admitted; but it is not clear that it was so much less as Dr. Whitaker supposes. Tanner says that Kirkstall "was endowed with £329 2*s.* 11*d.* pr ann. according to Dugdale, £512 13*s.* 4*d.* according to Speed." If a part of these vast domains, those, viz. called the Demesne of the Abbey, with two rectories and two manors elsewhere, may be supposed to have been worth £200 per ann. at the time of the dissolution, the instance of Latimer's farm being raised from £3 to £16 per ann., shews that rents might be quintupled in those times, and thus what was bought for £429 of King Henry VIII., in the midst of the insecurity inseparable from such changes, might well be worth £2800, near forty years later, in the prosperous reign of his daughter. It is not very clear what Dr. Whitaker's meaning is—"which made them £569 per ann." But if he means that the lands acquired by Cranmer were worth so much, we still require to know at what period this was.

But granted that Cranmer contracted with Henry VIII. for an advantageous purchase, partly of abbey lands, partly of a forfeited estate. We differ from him as to the propriety of buying or acquiring abbey lands at all. And we regret that he, of all men, should have had any concern in it whatever. But does it follow from this obscure trancaction, of which absolutely nothing is known beyond the record in the title deeds of a private gentleman, that he was basely intent upon sordid aggrandisement, when we know that he had barely enough at last to pay his debts? Aslacton was his native place, and he obtained the rectory for his nephew, the head of his family and owner of the place. As regards Kirkstall, it appears from the pedigree of his family given by Thoroton, that Thomas Cranmer was the name of his elder

brother's son and grandson, and it is not improbable that the Thomas who sold Kirkstall to Sir William Cecil, may have been the latter of these, and not his son as Thoresby supposes. And this would make a material difference, as much depends upon whether or no he actually left his acquisitions to his own children, or did not rather part with them, during his life, to his nephew, to pay his own expenses.

The character of Cranmer is of public interest. We never can flatter ourselves that it does not signify what were the motives of the chief agents in our Reformation. If truth compels us to censure them severely, by all means let us speak it. But let us not admit as truth, in such a case, any statements or inferences which are fairly capable of a different sense. When so many families were enriched by free grants from the crown, it is no great matter if Cranmer should have asked to purchase from his imperious master some part of a forfeited estate and some abbey lands, which the king wanted to sell. They were in the market and he bought them; and in the vast depreciation of property consequent upon such events, he bought them on favourable terms, as land might now be bought in Tipperary or Jamaica. Aslacton was his native place. As regards Kirkstall, why should we not hope that his design may have been to fulfil, in that instance, his own wish, of converting some of the monasteries to some educational purposes? It would be no wonder if subsequent events, and his own poverty, which he pleaded to Cecil, as related in the text, had prevented his fulfilling such intentions; for selfish or sordid Cranmer certainly was not.

F., p. 431.

Character of Mary.

If we would know what Mary was in these years of bitterness, we may learn it from a sketch by the hand of a contemporary, not John Foxe, nor any English or Protestant writer, but a bishop in the orders of the Church of Rome, Francis de Noailles, then residing as ambassador in the English court: his letter is dated May 7, 1556, and addressed to the king of France:—

"After receiving your majesty's command, and having learned that Lord Clinton was returned from France the day before, I sought an audience with the queen, and expressed to her in many words your majesty's satisfaction with the friendly demonstration and good purposes which you had received from her by Lord Clinton. With this language, and every thing that I said to this

purpose, she put on an appearance of pleasure, and said, first of all, that she would never be less disposed than she had been in time past to procure a good peace between you, sire, the Emperor, and the king her husband, as one of the things which of all others she desired most. She said she had received great pleasure and satisfaction from the gracious reception which your majesty had given to Lord Clinton, and the good and laudable purposes which you had professed, as my lord had reported them; especially she felt herself much obliged to your majesty that you had been pleased to promise to send her as prisoners some of her subjects who were in France, 'abominable wretches, heretics, and traitors! Well might she call them so,' she said, 'in regard to their crimes, which were so vile and execrable. She had no doubt that as a good and virtuous prince, attentive to the duties of a common amity, you would make your deeds answerable to your words, and that you would not keep them in your kingdom. For her part, she would not fail of her promise one jot, to gain three such kingdoms as England, France, and Spain; much less in so detestable a matter, as that of her said subjects.' And here she appealed, and repeated the question two or three times with a loud voice, to Lord Clinton, 'Was it not true that your majesty had promised to send them?' Clinton replied, 'Yes, provided your majesty could discover them.' When I then made answer, speaking of these persons as 'banished men,' or 'transfugees,' she prayed me not to call them so, but 'abominable heretics,' and 'traitors,' and 'even worse, if possible;' although she was very sorry to have occasion to call her own subjects by such bad names. I willingly complied with her pleasure, telling her that, as to this point, the good and friendly understanding between your two majesties was the reason why gentlemen and other subjects of hers had been usually well received in the realms and countries owing obedience to your majesty, but if those 'abominable wretches and traitors' had come there, and were now in your dominions, I was assured, since they were now known as such, your majesty would satisfy her wishes, provided they could be apprehended.

"These demands of the queen were made with such vehemence, and so often repeated, that it was evident, though she forced herself to give me a good and gracious reception, the very little I had said to contradict her (and it was very little), had thrown her into an extreme passion; and I took care to be on my guard, that she and her ministers should not suppose that the intention was to excuse our not delivering up these banished men sooner than was necessary. I must needs tell you, sire, that this princess lives constantly in two great extremes of anger and suspicion, for which we must excuse her, because she is in a continued madness of disappointment, not being able to enjoy either the presence of her

husband, or the love of her people; and she is also in great fear of losing her life by the treachery of some of her domestics, it having been lately found out that one of her chaplains had attempted to kill her, though they do not like to say much about it[1]."

---

[1] NOAILLES, vol. v., pp. 352, 3, 4. This seems to allude to one Thomas, mentioned in the text as "Pelerine Inglese."

THE END.

LONDON: HARRISON AND CO., PRINTERS, ST. MARTIN'S LANE.

APPROVED BOOKS

ON THE

SUPPLEMENTARY CATALOGUES OF THE SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE.

The Works distinguished by a Star, are those published under the direction of the Committee of General Literature and Education.

*Algebra. A First Book of Algebra, specially adapted for Beginners. 1*s. 6*d.*

Algebra. The Elements of Algebra, chiefly intended for the use of Schools and the lower classes in Colleges, by the Rev. T. G. Hall, M.A., Professor of Mathematics in King's College, London. 6*s. 6*d.*

*America. Sketches of the Animal and Vegetable Productions of America, by Mary Roberts. With Engravings, 3*s. 6*d.*

*Ancient History. The Elements of Ancient History. 2*s.* See INSTRUCTOR, Vol. VI.; and *Modern History.*

——————— The Student's Manual of Ancient History; containing the Political History, Geographical Position, and Social State of the Principal Nations of Antiquity; by W. C. Taylor, LL.D. 10*s. 6*d.* See *Modern History.*

Anglo-Saxon Church; its History, Revenues, and General Character. By the Rev. Henry Soames, M.A. 10*s. 6*d.*

*Animals. The Book of Animals, with many Engravings. 1*s. 6*d.* See *Birds, Fishes, Reptiles, Shells, Trees.*

*Arithmetic Taught by Questions. 1*s. 6*d.*

*——————— Instructions for Teaching Arithmetic to Little Children, by the Rt. Rev. T. V. Short, D.D., Lord Bishop of St. Asaph. 6*d.*

*——————— Hints for Teaching Decimal and Vulgar Fractions, by the Same. 8*d.*

*Astronomy. Outlines of Astronomy, by the Rev. Professor Hall, King's College, London. 10*d.*

——————— Lectures on Astronomy, delivered at King's College, London, by the Rev. Prof. Moseley. Many Cuts. 5*s. 6*d.*

——————— Recreations in Astronomy, by the Rev. Lewis Tomlinson, M.A. Many Engravings. 4*s. 6*d.*

Bible Geography. A Hand-Book of Bible Geography; containing (in Alphabetical Order) a Brief Account of the chief Places mentioned in the Old and New Testaments, descriptive of their ancient and modern condition. With Twelve Maps, 2*s*.

Bible Maps, with Memoirs, and an Index of Scriptural and Modern Names; forming a complete Historical and Descriptive Atlas of Scripture Geography. By William Hughes, F.R.G.S. Cloth, with the Maps coloured, 7*s*. 6*d*..

Bible Maps for Schools, 3*s*. sewed.

*Bible Spelling Book, with many Cuts. New Edition. Two Parts, 4*d*. each.

*Bible Word-Book; or, the Rudiments of English Grammar taught by the Words of the Old and New Testament, classed according to the Parts of Speech, and arranged according to the number of Syllables. 1*s*.

Biographical Sketches, selected from the SATURDAY MAGAZINE. With Illustrations, 1*s*. 4*d*.

*Biography. Readings in Biography; a Selection of the Lives of Eminent Men of all Nations. 4*s*. 6*d*.

*Birds. The Book of Birds, with many Engravings. 1*s*. 6*d*. See *Animals*, *Fishes*, *Reptiles*, *Shells*, *Trees*.

*—— A Familiar History of Birds, their Nature, Habits, and Instincts, by the Right Rev. E. Stanley, Lord Bishop of Norwich. Two Vols., with Engravings. 7*s*.

*Botany. The Elements of Botany, with many Engravings. 2*s*.

British Months, a Poem, by the Right Rev. Richard Mant, D.D., Lord Bishop of Down and Connor. Two Volumes, 9*s*.

Butler. Memoirs of the Life, Character, and Writings of Bishop Butler, by the Rev. T. Bartlett, M. A., Rector of Kingstone, &c. With fine Portrait. Octavo, 12*s*.

*Calendar. The Book of the Calendar, the Months, and the Seasons. 2*s*. See INSTRUCTOR, Vol. IV.

Callcott's (Lady) Tales;—the Little Bracken Burners, and Little Mary's Four Saturdays. *New Edition*. 1*s*. 6*d*.

*Class Reading Book; designed to furnish Youth with useful Information on various Subjects, by George Ludlow, Master in Christ's Hospital. 3*s*. bound.

Chemistry. An Introduction to Chemical Philosophy, being a Preparatory View of the Forces which concur to the Production of Chemical Phenomena, by J. F. Daniell, F.R.S., Professor of Chemistry, King's College, London. 21*s*.

Christian Evidences. Introductory Lessons on Christian Evidences, 6*d*.

*Christians. The Lives of Eminent Christians, by the Rev. R. B. Hone, M.A. Four Volumes, with Portraits, 4*s.* 6*d.* each.

Christians. The Early Christians; their Manners and Customs, Trials and Sufferings, by the Rev. W. Pridden, M.A. 4*s.*

*Christmas Carols (with Music); a Series of Original Sacred Songs, suitable for the Festival of Our Lord's Nativity; adapted to Select Music, and to various National Airs; arranged for one, two, and three Voices, with Accompaniments for the Piano-Forte. 4*s.*

Church. First Sundays at Church; or Familiar Conversations on the Morning and Evening Services, by the Rev. J. E. Riddle, M.A. 3*s.* 6*d.*

*Churchman's Almanack. Published Annually, 2*d.* and 4*d.*

*Church Scholar's Reading Book, containing Readings in various Branches of Knowledge. Selected from the Saturday Magazine, for the use of Diocesan and other Schools, with a copious Explanatory Index to each Volume. Three Volumes, which may be had separately, 3*s.* each.

*Colliery Tale, or Village Distress. 3*d.*

Columbus. The Life and Voyages of Christopher Columbus, and his Discovery of the New World; with Engravings. 2*s.* 6*d.*

*Conversations of a Father with his Children. Two Volumes, with many Cuts. 5*s.* 6*d.*

Cook. The Life, Voyages, and Discoveries of Captain Cook. Many Cuts. 2*s.* 6*d.*

*Crusaders; or Scenes, Events, and Characters, from the Times of the Crusaders, by Thomas Keightley. With Engravings. *New Edition*, in One Volume. 7*s.*

Deaf and Dumb Boy, a Tale by the Rev. W. Fletcher, M.A. 2*s.* 6*d.*

*Domesticated Animals, considered with reference to Civilization and the Arts, by Mary Roberts. Many Cuts, 3*s.* 6*d.* See *Wild Animals;* and *Sketches of the Animal and Vegetable Productions of America.*

Ecclesiastical and Eleemosynary Statutes. The Practical Statutes, relating to the Ecclesiastical and Eleemosynary Institutions of England, Wales, Ireland, India and the Colonies: with the Decisions thereon. By Archibald John Stephens, M.A., F.R.S., Barrister at Law. Two Volumes, Royal Octavo, £3 3*s.*, boards; £3 13*s.* 6*d.* bound in law calf.

*Education and Treatment of Children; *The Mother's Book*, adapted to the Use of Parents and Teachers. 2*s.* 6*d.*

Elizabethan Religious History, by the Rev. Henry Soames, M.A. Octavo, 16*s.*

*England. Outlines of the History of England, by George Hogarth. With Cuts, 1*s.* 3*d.* See *Rome, Greece, Sacred History.*

*England. A School History of England; with a copious Chronology, Tables of Contemporary Sovereigns, and Questions for Examination, abridged from Gleig's Family History of England. 6*s.*

*England. The Family History of England, by the Rev. G. R. Gleig, M.A. With an extensive Series of Pictorial Illustrations. Three Volumes, at 6*s.* 6*d.*

*English Grammar, by the Rev. Dr. Russell, late Head Master of the Charter House. 1*s.* 6*d.*

*English Literature. Readings in English Prose Literature; containing Choice Specimens from the best English Writers, with Essays on English Literature. 4*s.* 6*d.* See *Readings in Poetry*.

*Extracts from Travellers, illustrative of Manners and Customs mentioned in various passages of Holy Scripture. With numerous Engravings. 4*s.*

Euclid. The Figures of Euclid, with Questions and a Praxis of Geometrical Exercises, by Rev. J. Edwards, M.A., King's College. 3*s.*

Fables and Moral Maxims, in Prose and Verse, selected by Anne Parker. With One Hundred Wood Cuts. 3*s.* 6*d.*

*Fables and Classical Sketches, by a Clergyman. With Illustrations. 1*s.* 8*d.*

*Familiar Tales and Conversations, with Easy Lessons from History. Many Cuts, 2*s.* See INSTRUCTOR, Vol. I.

*Fishes. The Book of Fishes. With many Wood Cuts. 1*s.* 6*d.* See *Animals, Birds, Reptiles, Shells, Trees*.

France. Outlines of the History of France, by the Rev. O. Cockayne, M.A., of King's College Schools, London. 1*s.* 3*d.*

*Geography. Outlines of Geography, by George Hogarth. With Maps, &c. 10*d.*

*———— Descriptive Geography, with Popular Statistics of various Countries. 2*s.* See INSTRUCTOR, Vol. V.

———— Recreations in Physical Geography, or the Earth as it is, by Miss R. M. Zornlin. Many Cuts and Maps. 6*s.* See *Recreations in Astronomy*.

*Geometry. A First Book in Geometry, including Plane and Solid Geometry, and an Introduction to Trigonometry. 1*s.* 6*d.*

*Greece. Outlines of Grecian History, by the Rev. Barton Bouchier, M.A. With Cuts. 1*s.* See *Rome, England, Sacred History*.

*History of the Christian Church, from the Ascension of Jesus Christ to the Conversion of Constantine, by the late Prof. Burton. 6*s.* 6*d.*

House I live in; or Familiar Illustrations of the Structure and Functions of the Human Body. With Engravings. 2*s.* 6*d.*

History of the Church of Ireland: by the Rt. Rev. R. Mant, D.D., Lord Bishop of Down and Connor. Two large Volumes, 17*s.* each.

VOLUME I.—From the Reformation to the Revolution, with a Preliminary Survey from the Papal Usurpation in the Twelfth Century, to its Legal Abolition in the Sixteenth.

VOLUME II.—From the Revolution to the Union; with a Catalogue of the Archbishops and Bishops, and a Notice of the Alterations made in the Hierarchy in the Reign of William IV.

Household Matters. Instructions in Household Matters; or, The Young Girl's Guide to Domestic Service. Written by a Lady, with an especial view to Young Girls intended for Service on leaving School. With Wood-cuts, 1*s.* 6*d.*

Humboldt's Travels and Discoveries in America. With Engravings, 2*s.* 6*d.*

*The INSTRUCTOR; or Progressive Lessons in General Knowledge, with Questions for Examination. Seven Volumes, each being complete in itself, and Illustrated by numerous Wood Cuts. 2*s.* per Volume.

I. Familiar Tales, Conversations, and Lessons from History.

II. Lessons on Houses, Furniture, Food, and Clothing.

III. Lessons on the Universe.

IV. The Book of the Calendar, the Months, and the Seasons.

V. Descriptive Geography, with Popular Statistics.

VI. Elements of Ancient History.

VII. Elements of Modern History.

*Insects and their Habitations; a Book for Children. Cuts. 1*s.*

Jews. The Civil History of the Jews, from Joshua to Hadrian; with Notices of Manners and Customs, Geography and Antiquities. By the Rev. O. Cockayne, A.M., of King's College, London. 4*s.* 6*d.*

*Lessons of Praise, in easy Verse, for Children. 4*d.*

*Lessons on Houses, Furniture, Food, and Clothing. 2*s.* See INSTRUCTOR, Vol. II.

*Lessons on the Universe; the Animal, Vegetable, and Mineral Kingdoms; and the Human Form. 2*s.* See INSTRUCTOR, Vol. III.

Light in Darkness: or, the Records of a Village Rectory. 3*s.* 6*d.*

*Little Reading Book for Young Children. With Engravings. 4*d.*

Little Bracken Burners, a Tale; and Little Mary's Four Saturdays. By Lady Callcott. *New Edition.* 1*s.* 6*d.*

*Margaret Trevors; or, a Blessing on the Observance of the Lord's Day. 4*d.*

*Mechanics. Easy Lessons in Mechanics, with Familiar Illustrations of the Practical Application of Mechanical Principles. 3*s.*

*Mechanics applied to the Arts, by the Rev. Professor Moseley, King's College, London. Numerous Wood Cuts. 6*s.* 6*d.*

*Minerals and Metals; their Natural History, and Uses in the Arts; with Accounts of Mines and Mining. With many Cuts. 2*s.* 6*d.*

*Modern History. The Elements of Modern History. 2*s.* See INSTRUCTOR, Vol. VII.; and *Ancient History*.

——————— The Student's Manual of Modern History; the Rise and Progress of the Principal European Nations, their Political History, and the Changes in their Social Condition; with a History of the Colonies founded by Europeans, by Dr. W. C. Taylor. 10*s.* 6*d.*

*Mohammedanism. The History of Mohammedanism, and the Principal Mohammedan Sects, by Dr. W. C. Taylor. 5*s.* 6*d.*

*Money Matters. Easy Lessons in Money Matters. With Cuts. 1*s.*

*Music. A Manual of Instruction in Vocal Music, chiefly with a view to Psalmody, by John Turner, Esq. 4*s.*

——— Instruction Cards, prescribed in the above Manual; No. 1 Notation: No. 2, The Diatonic Major Scale, or Key; with Examples. 1*s.* per Dozen Cards.

Natural History. Sister Mary's Tales in Natural History; with Cuts. 2*s.* 6*d.*

Natural History. See *Books of Animals, Birds, Fishes, Reptiles, Trees, Shells; Familiar History of Birds; Domesticated Animals; Wild Animals; Animal and Vegetable Productions of America; Minerals and Metals; Instructor, &c.*

Natural Philosophy for Beginners; Familiar Illustrations of the Laws of Motion and Mechanics. With upwards of One Hundred Wood Cuts. 3*s.* 6*d.*

Natural Philosophy. The Student's Manual of Natural Philosophy; Descriptions of the most imprtant Philosophical Instruments, their History, Nature, and Uses; with complete Elucidations of the Sciences to which they appertain. By Charles Tomlinson. 10*s.* 6*d.*

*Palestine. Three Weeks in Palestine and Lebanon. With many Engravings, 3*s.*

*Park's Travels. The Life and Travels of Mungo Park; with an Account of his Death, and the Substance of later Discoveries. With Wood Cuts. 2*s.* 6*d.*

*Persian Fables, for Young and Old. By the Rev. G. Keene. Wood Cuts. 1*s.*

*Persian Stories; illustrative of Eastern Manners and Customs. By the Same. Wood Cuts. 1*s.*

Penny Saved is a Penny Got; a Village Tale founded on Facts. 6*d.*

Poetry. Popular Poems, selected by Elizabeth Parker. 3*s.* 6*d.*

*Poetry. Readings in Poetry; Selections from the Works of the best English Writers, with Specimens of the American Poets. 4*s.* 6*d.*

Pretty Lessons for Good Children; with Easy Lessons in Latin, by Sara Coleridge. With Engravings, 2*s.*

*Physiology. Popular Physiology; or Familiar Explanations of Interesting Facts connected with the Structure and Functions of Animals, and particularly of Man, by the late Dr. Lord. With Engravings. 7*s.* 6*d.*

*Roman History. Outlines of Roman History, by George Hogarth. With many Wood Cuts, 10*d.*

*Reading Books. The First Book, 2*d.* The Second Book, 8*d.* The Third Book, 1*s.* 8*d.* The Fourth Book, 2*s.* 8*d.*

Reasoning. Easy Lessons on Reasoning, reprinted from the *Saturday Magazine.* 1*s.* 6*d.*

*Reptiles. The Book of Reptiles. With many Wood Cuts. 1*s.* 6*d.* See *Animals, Birds, Fishes, Shells, Trees.*

*Sacred Poets. Lives of the English Sacred Poets. By the Rev. R. A. Willmot. Two Volumes, 9*s.*

*Sacred History. Outlines of Sacred History, from the Creation of the World, to the Destruction of Jerusalem. With many Cuts. 3*s.* 6*d.*

Sacred Minstrelsy: a Collection of Sacred Music from the finest Works of the Great Masters, arranged as Solos, and Concerted Pieces for Private Performance, with Accompaniments for the Piano Forte, Organ, &c. With Biographical Sketches of the Composers, and Historical and Critical Accounts of their Works. Half-bound, in Two handsome Folio Volumes, Turkey Morocco, Two Guineas.

Sancroft. Life of Archbishop Sancroft, by George D'Oyly, D.D. With Portrait, 9*s.*

Saturday Magazine. Half Yearly Volumes, I. to XXV., at 4*s.* 6*d.*

——————— Annual Volumes, 1833 to 1844, at 7*s.* 6*d.*

*Schools. Hints on School-Keeping. By the Right Rev. T. V. Short, D.D., Lord Bishop of St. Asaph. 8*d.*

*Science. Readings in Science, or Familiar Explanations of Appearances in Nature, and of Principles in Natural Philosophy. With many Cuts, 5*s.* See *Natural Philosophy.*

*Shells. The Book of Shells, with numerous Engravings. 1*s. 6d.*

*Sunday Schools. Hints for the Formation and Management of Sunday Schools, by the Rev. J. C. Wigram. 1*s. 6d.*

*———————— Advice to Teachers of Sunday Schools in connection with the Church, by the Lord Bishop of Fredericton. 3*d.*

*———————— A Pocket Manual for the Sunday School Teacher, by the Rev. J. Hull. 1*s.*

Susan Carter, the Orphan Girl. 6*d.*

———————————. Part II., 8*d.*

Tales and Stories from History. By Agnes Strickland. Two Volumes, bound and gilt, with Cuts, 7*s.*

Taylor, Bishop Jeremy; his Predecessors, Contemporaries, and Successors. By the Rev. R. A. Willmott, M.A., Incumbent of St. Catherine's, Bear Wood. 5*s.*

Travels. See *Humboldt's Travels, Palestine and Lebanon, Park's Travels.*

*Trees. The Book of Trees. With many Engravings, 2*s.* See *Animals, Birds, Fishes, Reptiles, Shells.*

Useful Arts employed in the Production of Food. With numerous Wood Cuts. 2*s.* 6*d.*

Useful Arts employed in the Production of Clothing. With numerous Wood Cuts. 2*s.* 6*d.*

Useful Arts employed in the Construction of Dwelling Houses. With numerous Wood Cuts. 2*s.* 6*d.*

Useful Hints for Labourers, selected from the Publications of the Labourers' Friend Society. Two Series, 1*s.* 6*d.* each.

*Village Annals, or the Story of Hetty Jones. 9*d.*

Voyages. See *Columbus' Voyages, Cook's Voyages.*

Wild Animals; their Nature, Habits and Instincts, by Mary Roberts. With many Engravings. 3*s.* 6*d.* See *Domesticated Animals.*

LONDON: JOHN W. PARKER, PUBLISHER, WEST STRAND.